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WITH KUROKI IN MANCHURIA

FREDERICK PALMER

THREE CORRESPONDENTS

WITH KUROKI IN MANCHURIA

327

BY

FREDERICK PALMER

AUTHOR OF "GOING TO WAR IN GREECE," "IN THE KLONDYKE," "THE WAYS OF THE SERVICE," ETC.

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WITH TWENTY ILLUSTRATIONS

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CONTENTS

CHAPTER I

PAGE

When Komura sent for De Rosen 1

CHAPTER II

The Old and the New 7

CHAPTER III

The Night of Victory 17

CHAPTER IV

To the Front 25

CHAPTER V

Catching up with the Army 33

CHAPTER VI

First Operations at the Yalu 45

CHAPTER VII

Crossing of the Yalu 53

CHAPTER VIII

Battle of the Yalu 65

CHAPTER IX

After the Yalu—Hasiatan 79

CHAPTER X

The Owner of the Battle-ground 93

CHAPTER XI

A Tribute to the Dead 101

CHAPTER XII

PAGE

THREE DIVISIONS ON THREE ROADS 109

CHAPTER XIII

FIRST ATTACK ON MOTIEN PASS 123

CHAPTER XIV

SECOND ATTACK ON MOTIEN PASS 141

CHAPTER XV

A RIGHT WING IN THE AIR 165

CHAPTER XVI

BATTLE OF TIENSUITEN 175

CHAPTER XVII

AFTER TIENSUITEN 195

CHAPTER XVIII

A CORRESPONDENT'S LIFE IN MANCHURIA . . . 207

CHAPTER XIX

A LETTER IN CAMP TO NIPPON DENJI 219

CHAPTER XX

LIAOYANG—FIGHTING OUR WAY INTO POSITION . . 233

CHAPTER XXI

THE ARTILLERY DUEL AT LIAOYANG 249

CHAPTER XXII

LIAOYANG—KUROKI CROSSES THE TAITSE . . . 265

CHAPTER XXIII

AN IMPORTANT "LITTLE HILL" 275

CHAPTER XXIV

KUROPATKIN RETREATS 287

LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS

PAGE.

Three correspondents . . . . . *Frontispiece*
General Kuroki and his staff at Antung 1
Landing troops from transports at Chenampo . . . 28
Pontoons used on the Yalu passing artillery camp near Wiju 48
Trench built by Russians at Antung and never used . 82
Some of the guns captured at Hamatan 89
Chinese garrison going out to meet General Kuroki on his arrival at Feng-Wang-Cheng 93
A noonday rest on the march 119
A field dressing-station 136
The Japanese battery concealed in the kowliang which the Russians could not locate at the battle of Tiensuiten 190
The gun of the wooded-hill battery that was upset in flight 197
The mountain battery in action on August 26th . . 237
Infantry fording the Tang River on August 28th . . 244
Boiling rice in rain, afternoon, August 28th . . . 246
Guns of the 2nd Division crossing the Taitse River . 252
An outpost waiting and watching 255
Shrapnel bursts over infantry at Liaoyang . . . 272
Field telephone buried to protect it from fire . . . 276
A Japanese battery in action in the kowliang . . . 282
Searching for dead among the pits of the Russian main line of defence at Liaoyang 290

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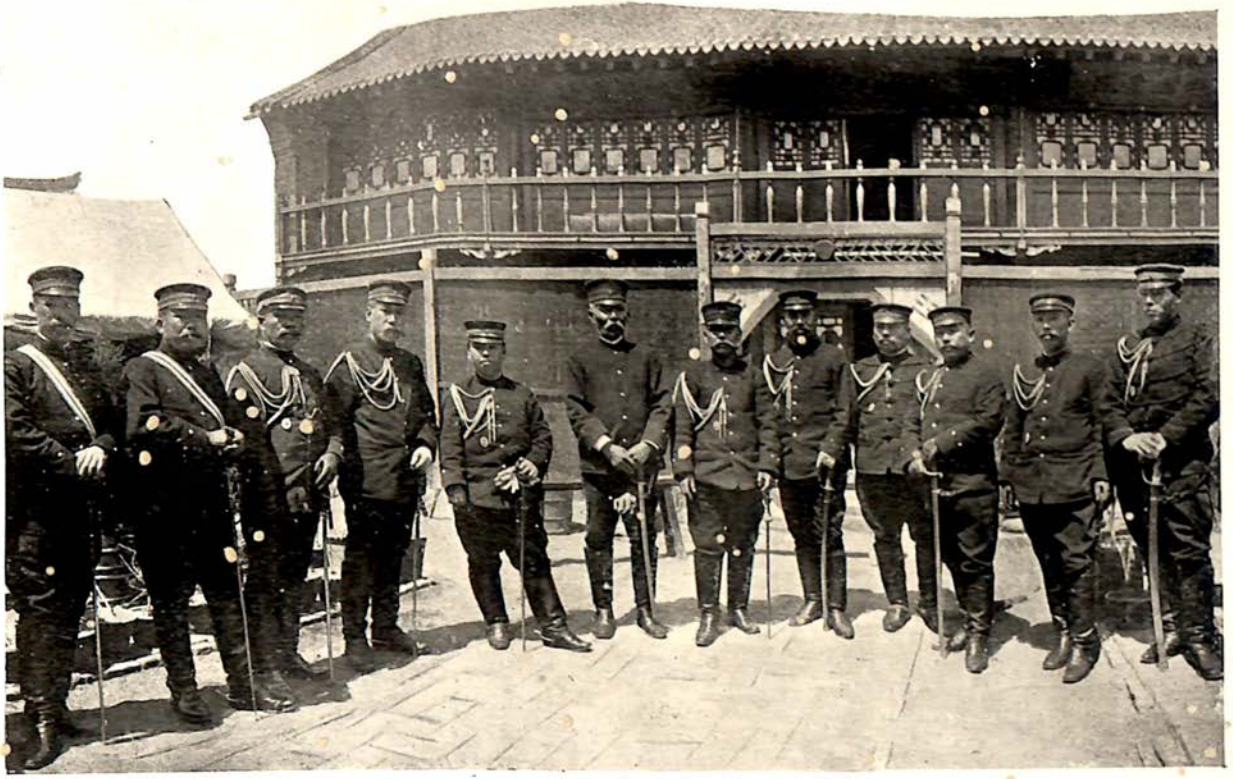

GENERAL KUROKI AND HIS STAFF AT ANTUNG

KUROKI MARKED WITH AN ARROW, ON HIS RIGHT PRINCE KUNI, ON HIS LEFT CHIEF OF STAFF, MAJOR-GENERAL FUJII

WITH KUROKI IN MANCHURIA

CHAPTER I

WHEN KOMURA SENT FOR DE ROSEN

RUMOURS instead of hours have marked the passage of the days of waiting. You tightened the mainspring for a new lot when you wound your watch at night. This afternoon came one unlike the others, definite in shape, electric in transmission from lip to lip, having the magnetic force of truth :—

"Komura has sent for De Rosen. It has come."

Though the words were from your servant, you believed them as readily as you believe in an earthquake shock that you feel. To-night the whole nation knows that negotiations are at an end, and bloodshed is about to begin. The years of expectancy have culminated in the decisive step. The patient Government has at last given the word.

Where are the crowds? Why is there no cheering? Doubtless more people are watching the bulletins in London and New York than here. "Think of Piccadilly or Broadway on such a night!" exclaims the foreigner. In Japan there is little to see, little to hear. There is everything to feel. Two theories which you at home may have from this description you would never have here. There is no apathy; there is no doubt or fear. Instead of going abroad to gather in public places and shout, the Japanese go to the houses of their friends and sit over their hibachis (charcoal-burners) and talk little—very little. They know that there is to be war, and that is enough. It is the war that they have prayed for—almost a holy war.

Throughout the land to-day and yesterday a shower of pink tickets has fallen. Each ticket called a man out of a kimono into a tunic; out of getas into military shoes. It said, according to Japanese logic, "The Mikado has given you life; now he calls upon you to give it back." There is no weeping at the farewell. I saw a reservist parting with his family at the railway station to-night. He came in with his little boy, olive-skinned, round-faced, smiling—a live Japanese doll of three years—thrown over his shoulders. The womenfolk formed the inner circle, the men the outer. In the centre of such a group, the soldier in his Occidental uniform seemed to belong to a world apart. There was no weeping; for years they had expected him

to go, and now he was going. He smiled, and they smiled at the parting—a variation of that Japanese smile which says, "We are sad, and try to show that we are not by being merry."

Yesterday there were no signs of preparation; to-day there have been signs of preparation everywhere for those who would see them. On the parade-ground, and in other public places, officers with little note-books, hundreds of coolies, and loads of timber, suddenly appeared. They settled down to their task as if it were the routine of every day. There was little shouting, no seeming hurry, no oaths snatching order out of confusion. The order was in the officers' note-books, in lines of ideographs running up and down the pages. With the rapidity of circus tents, rose long lines of sheds for the horses of a division. There was not even the hammering which is the bass of the hackneyed "din of preparation." The girders and the supports were bound together by the deft wrapping of straw ropes. Every board and every stick seemed to have its place, and those in command to know just where the place was. At the same moment that the coolie ants began their work, officers went from house to house to provide for the billeting of soldiers, and more lines of ideographs were made in note-books.

In a few hours the soldiers—dropping their peace tasks wherever the pink tickets found them—began to arrive, and settled down in their quarters, quiet, welcome guests of quiet hosts. Why go out and

cheer when you might sit over the hibachi and smile with the heroes-to-be, who, augustly condescending, have deigned to honour a poor domicile with their presence?

At the Russian Legation the gates are closed. No Japanese stops in passing. The native attendants in the little lodges on either side of the massive grill-work with its gold-crowned double-headed eagle, press their faces to the windows querulously. The thin columns of smoke rising from the chimneys form the only other signs of life. Within the silent structure are the sole beings in all Japan who wish for Russian success. Baron de Rosen and the attachés, awaiting their departure, might well wish for a crowd and some signs of demonstration to break the sinister quiet.

"War has come!" the foreigner may say to a Japanese.

"Yes," with a smile—as if to imply, "Will you augustly condescend to excuse the war for coming?"

"And Japan is going to fight hard and win victories?"

"Yes," with the same smile, quizzical and meaning—meaning one knows not what to the map of Asia.

The click of the getas on the stones seems itself to be in a minor key, so few people are abroad; the jinrikisha men, huddled in their blankets at their stands, knock the ashes out of their tiny pipes and

start homeward. The little shops close no earlier, remain open no later. Their workers are busy with their tasks rather than with discussing war. Yet they welcome the news, and they would give their all for the cause. By midnight you look the length of the streets without seeing the flight of a single one of the vari-coloured lanterns which the runners hold on the thrills of the little man-carriages. Tokyo is going to bed at the usual hour. But what thoughts may be passing behind the paper windows with their checkered lattice-work, through which the lights are no longer shining, is as far from our knowledge as what is passing in the office of the General Staff.

"Scared, aren't they?" asked an American who arrived in Japan to-day for the first time. "Why don't they get out their bands?"

"Study the Japanese smile," residents warned him.

"But this little people in their paper-houses against the big Russians! Haven't they awakened to what they have undertaken, and aren't they worried? Why, they are beaten at the start by their own showing!"

"Study the Japanese smile," again the residents warned him.

In other lands the withdrawal of Ministers means the playing of fortissimo passages with the brasses. On another historical night, thirty odd years ago, the Paris crowd was crying, "On to Berlin!" In

Japan it is pianissimo with the violins, which means more than the brasses. There is no shouting of "On to Manchuria!" yet. The hush of the long-expected come true, the issue narrowed to the extremity of a bull's eye, the plain realization of this day, this hour, being a landmark in history, have outweighed superficial impulse.

We who are in Tokyo to-day have witnessed a racial phenomenon. Associating the thought of rabble with a noisy mouth, one may feel how by extremes the very jinrikisha coolies have taken on an air of senatorial dignity. The man new to Japan only wonders, or thinks he is not getting what is advertised; others realize that their study of the Japanese smile has only begun.

CHAPTER II

THE OLD AND THE NEW

THIS morning, after Tokyo had slept one night on the fact of actual war, it was my good fortune to have an hour's talk with Field-Marshal Marquis Yamagata, the man behind the Cabinet, who, more than any other, is responsible for the step Japan has taken. The appointment with him had first been made for a week ago. When the day set arrived, the *Genro* were hastily summoned to one of their urgent sittings, and in the language of his secretary, his Excellency was "very busy." From the moment when negotiations were broken off the field work of the elder statesmen was finished; that of the army had begun. One of them with true *samurai* courtesy signified his leisure by not forgetting the request of a foreigner.

The drive to the Marquis's house took me to the farthest suburbs of the city. We passed many small, two-wheeled army carts drawn by ponies, and the still smaller ones drawn by coolies. Splashes of red of the stripes of Imperial Guardsmen's new caps or trousers showed through crates that were piled

high in contrast to the compact little boxes that contained ammunition. The reservists from outlying districts were on their way to town. With each one were his nearest friends. The road became a procession of groups. If your servant is absent in Japan, the death, the sickness, or the marriage of a "friend" calls him. It is a land of groups of friends. All the cronies of his age see the recruit into the army, and see the recruit become reservist back into it again. The parting with his wife or his mother, or his sweetheart, is usually at the doorstep.

If you looked away from the soldiers and the policemen on the beat, at the shops with their sliding screens pushed back, making windows and doors and show-windows and show-room into one; at the ideographic signs and the garb of the daily workers, either near-by or in the fields, the vista still had everything in common with the Japan of forty years ago, which knew no world but her own.

It was striking that on this morning of all mornings I was going to see the man I was. He had grown to manhood under a régime as different from ours as that of the Chinese from the ancient Greeks. As a youth, if he had cut off his queue, he would have been debased from his rank as a gentleman. If he had attempted to leave his native country he would have suffered death, which the Shogun thought a fit punishment for a crime against the isolation which was the gospel of the land.

Yamagata's first experience of war was as a feudal swordsman clad in armour, who fought according to the Japanese counterpart of the etiquette of the Knights of the Round Table. Clan warfare, the only kind known, was then the privilege of the few, like private yachts. A gentleman born (a *samurai*) alone had the right to bear arms. Until you know the chivalry, courage, pride, and stoicism that that word stood for, you can in no wise understand how it is that this suddenly transformed Oriental people to-day cross the seas to fight on its own ground the Russian Empire. A farm labourer in those days was as far from the right to bear arms as a long-shoreman is from a bishopric. Yet this Yamagata has lived to lead one army, whose soldiers were composed of all classes and armed with modern rifles, in a victorious foreign war; and he may yet take the field in another and infinitely greater one when the transports shall carry an army of three or four hundred thousand men to Korea and Manchuria.

If I had gone to see him forty years ago—when I might not have gone unless I had been a Japanese, and worn a queue and two swords—we should have sat on mats with our legs crossed, in houses without windows, doors, or chairs. Profound would have been our bows, delicately worded our compliments. To-day, I drove into a tree-studded yard that was entirely Japanese, surrounding a stone and stucco building which was distinctly Occidental.

(The Japanese have found our houses more comfortable, if less artistic, than their own. Their sylvan effects they most wisely retain.) I was ushered into a reception-room that might be that of a well-to-do person with distinction of taste at home.

Yamagata has in this age the versatility and the classic simplicity of being soldier and statesman in one that we associate with another age. A Field-Marshal by right of his victories in the field; one of the five Elder Statesmen; the Mikado's counsellor in civil as well as in military affairs, and the head of the political coalition responsible for the present Cabinet, he stands for the policy and the administration that brought on the war. He is not of the school of Radicalism, but of the old school of Japan; a Tory rather than a Whig. The manners of other days in Japan are reflected in him as the manners of other days in America are in an old-time Southerner.

. . . . .

I have said that he was one of the five elder statesmen; the five who are known as the *Genro*. Their part is advisory in a land which follows the precept of old men for counsel, and young men for action. All were leaders in the reformation. In the play and counterplay of politics, everyone has known at some time each of the others as an ally. To-day, for the first time, so far as their front to the world goes, they are united—for the war. In

the weeks past they have held many secret meetings, whose minutes were reported to the Imperial ear alone. Out of their candid discussions has come the Imperial conclusion, and, finally, the Imperial word. For the Emperor is the one who decides. He listens and listens, as expressionless of face as the Buddha at Kamakura, and, once his determination is made known, keeps the faith of ancestral infallibility by holding to it.

Foremost of the *Genro* is Ito, purely the civilian, purely the statesman, who is criticized for his foreign policy as Gladstone was; while Yamagata, the soldier, is criticized for his home policy as Salisbury was. But he is not without chivalric appeal to his countrymen. It was Ito who, out of far-seeing patriotism and a youthful spirit of curiosity, cut off his queue and put aside his *samurai* sword when the penalty was loss of caste as a gentleman; who went aboard a British trading ship and secured passage to distant lands when the penalty of visiting distant lands was death. Once in his country house at Oiso he told me the story of how the British skipper who made an unwelcome passenger callous his soft hands on ropes and sails, found a *samurai* game. For his sacrifice he learned where the foreigners' power lay; and queueless, swordless, he returned to his country with the message—meaning so much to Russia—that the only way to keep the foreigners out was to use the foreigners' weapons. That was forty years ago. Now, Japan not only uses

foreigners' weapons, but makes them; and the laying of the extensive new trolley-car system of Tokyo is not interrupted by the war.

At the great court dinners of this feudal, this ever impressively unique state, Ito has a little table near the throne among the princes, by himself. In the old days the Mikado resided in state at Kyoto, and the Shogun at Tokyo ruled Japan. Now the Mikado is in Tokyo and Ito is his right arm. After him comes Yamagata; and then, in order, Inouye, who accompanied Ito abroad, and Matsukata. They hold no office. They are sages superior to the cabinet, which is a Conservative cabinet—Yamagata's. Neither Oyama, the head of the army, nor Ito, the head of the navy, is one of them. But their turn has come. The *Genro* decided that war was best. Oyama and Inouye made war.

. . . . . .

It was Yamagata the country gentleman, the statesman, not Yamagata the soldier, whom I saw; this slight, elderly man in a frock coat, with his bronzed face, his high cheekbones, his good-humoured eyes, and hair turning gray, in his person bringing one nearer to the old Japan, and in his military power to the modern Japan, than any other man. His secretary, Mr. Nakayama, who interpreted for us, is a Harvard graduate. But he is young and born to this régime; he has about him the air of the Occident. The Marquis belongs at once to this régime and to the one before. As we

sipped our ceremonial tea, he talked of the war which was only sixteen hours old; the war on which he had staked his reputation; the war which meant to his people more than their political future—their future as individuals. He spoke of it as simply and as calmly as if war were an every-day affair. Nothing in the shrewd face showed that he had been under continuous strain for weeks.

I spoke to him of the two things which made me marvel most. The first was the organization into a united, thoroughly disciplined army of classes which formerly had never associated; of clans that had always been at the sword's point; of the "groups" of friends ever ready to become factions. One might as well have expected to make a Finn a good Russian as to make a unit out of the Japanese of 1850. The army, absorbing all clan rights, seems to-day one man and one mind, keeping its secrets as one. How was this brought about?

I wanted to hear the explanation from the Field-Marshal who had seen the army rise from the first companies that threw away their bows and arrows for rifles. There was the Oriental deprecation of self in his answer, which left me knowing little more than before. He seemed a little surprised that the success had been so manifest to foreigners. It had been very difficult, and it was still very difficult, according to a Field-Marshal's high ideas of discipline, to make Japanese officers and men realize the spirit of military unity as they should.

"The spirit of corps that keeps military secrets seems perfect," I suggested.

"Not entirely," he said, gently. "Some will talk when they ought not to. Our newspapers, too, are far from being as careful as they should be. Rather than know everything in due time, they want to publish something before any one else. They are not yet enough advanced to be discreet."

I wondered what a news editor would say to that; but I did not carry the subject far afield.

This morning, the greatest of newspaper mornings, all that appeared was the official statement of the negotiations, with Japan's reasons for breaking them off. There was nothing about the mobilization, or what troops were here or being moved there, because the Government had given strong hints of what it would and would not permit to be published. The great reason for the rise of a united army lies in the inherent respect of the Japanese for law, for the Mikado, for the nobility, and for the Mikado's counsellors.

To my second question, the answer was more enlightening to the foreigner who comes to Japan as the Japanese go abroad, bristling with question marks.

"If you will look at the geographical position of Korea, you will see that it is like a poniard pointing at the heart of Japan," said the Marquis. "If Korea is occupied by a foreign power, the Japan Sea ceases to be Japanese, and the Korean Straits are no longer in our control. Our public men are

of many parties, not of two only, as are yours in America. Our Cabinets are the product of coalitions, which, for the time being, seem to his Majesty and the legislative power best to serve the interests of the country. Foreign policy is a thing entirely apart. In the consideration of Korea and Manchuria, all men of all parties needed only patriotism to realize the singleness of our interests. Whatever Cabinet was in power continued the policy of its predecessor, and the policy of all on a question which put the very life of our nation at stake. So our unchanging attitude from the outset of our disagreement with Russia has been natural and inevitable. In its negotiations, the Government has patiently kept the hope of peace in view. No agitation prejudicial to calm deliberation has been permitted. A society organized against Russia was suppressed. Our demands were clear and unfaltering. We had to deal with an enemy whose methods were those of evasion and hypocrisy, to whom delay meant advantage."

This war completes the chain of Japan's calculations. It represents the third period in the forwarding of her high ambitions. First, when foreign fleets opened her ports by force, she set out to make those internal reforms and to organize an army on modern principles which should guarantee her safety. As a monument of the initial step, the old forts built after Perry's coming still stand in Tokyo Bay. The diplomacy of such men as Yamagata, with the constructive home policy of

Ito, went hand in hand with military organization, in which the fear of India's fate was the "battle-cry of clans to sink their differences." But still the foreigners in the treaty ports lived under their own law.

The second step was the Chino-Japanese War, when the world expected to see the giant crush the midget under his thumb, and instead saw the mite raise the flag of victory over the giant's belly. It was then, by the weapons with which place is won, that Japan forced herself into a position of power among the family of nations. Ex-territoriality ceased; foreigners are now under Japanese law. The Japanese people, thanks to the combination of Russia, Germany, and France, had to see the territory which they had won by their blood fall to the lot of Russia's "glacial approach."

The third period is at hand. Its task is commensurate with the reward it offers. By her arms, Japan must win a place for her congested population across the seas, with the prospect of becoming one of the greatest of world powers. It shows how long human life may be in the changes and the deeds it may compass, that the *samurai* before me had lived through the two periods to help precipitate the third. Yet the explanation is not so difficult. A highly civilized race was simply transformed from fighting with swords to fighting with small-bore rifles and battleships; from heralds to newspapers; from hand to machine looms.

CHAPTER III

THE NIGHT OF VICTORY

YESTERDAY the Japanese lanterns were telescoped; to-night they are alight; to-night Tokyo hears only of victory. All day the men who sell the extras have been hurrying through the streets, their cries drowning the decorous tinkle of their little bells. Bulletins, the size of a sheet of notepaper, have been sweetmeats to the public, whose stomach could not have surfeit of such news. This we do know: the cruiser *Variag* and the gunboat *Korietz* are wrecks at Chemulpo, and Admiral Togo has dealt a telling blow at Port Arthur. Much more we hope, wanting to believe every happy rumour that ink makes on paper and sends broadcast with clarion voice—price, one *sen*.

The Japanese does not cheer until he has won. To-night the population of the town seems twenty times what it was the night war began. Tokyo, having something to be proud of, opens its doors and shows its head. The little Buddhist images, with far-off, subtle smiles, wake up and blink. The paper-windowed houses that husbanded doubts and

fears, and the tense expectancy of a people who think of their Emperor's fortune before their own, send their occupants forth, if not to merry-making, at least to walk up and down. Streets that were dark last night dance with globes of yellow light to-night.

The Japanese lantern does not belong in a land where you read from left to right horizontally, but to a land where you read from right to left perpendicularly. The lantern goes with the people, their houses, their costume, and their manners. You must come to Japan to understand the lantern; you must be in Tokyo on the night of victory to realize that it is a living thing.

In columns of twos and threes—an ill-lighted city serving a pictorial end—winding in and out through the streets ran the yellow balls of light, clear-cut against the darkness, while under them was the roar of song and cheer. They went to the Admiralty, and from the steps of the big building of European architecture, the Minister of Marine made them a speech. All this was Occidental. The foreigners' interest lay farther on when the parade, with its crest of moons, passed across the moat and through the double gates that open at the corner of the palace enclosure into the park that faces the gates through which the State carriages pass to the most exclusive of courts.

Across the length of the park the lantern-bearers formed in close order. Every face was turned

toward the palace. The lanterns were raised high as the "Banzais!" rang out. "Dai Nippon banzai! Dai Nippon banzai! Banzai, banzai, banzai!" The dim light showed the students of the higher schools in their neat-fitting Western uniforms—they who had missed fighting for their beloved country by being born three or four years too late. The best that they could do was to split their throats in the cold, moist night air. At their heels, in the freer garb of kimonos, were the students of the university, with their future of developing and civilizing the lands that the navy and army should win.

"Isn't it pretty near time that the Emperor showed himself?" a foreigner asked. All faces were turned toward, all eyes were looking toward, a wall of darkness. Out of it was visible only the white sides of one of the buildings in the enclosure.

If this had been St. Petersburg, and the Russians had won, we can imagine how the Czar might have appeared in a doorway for a moment, under a blaze of light. That would be a part of the *mise en scène* for that land; a part that would receive the approval of a Sardou. Japan is different—always different. This is an Emperor whose ancestors have sat on the throne from time immemorial. If Palestine were to-day a free Jewish nation, and the Jews an inherently warlike people who had never known conquest, the descendant of Moses, who sat on the throne, would mean to them what their

Emperor does to the Japanese. The services and the surroundings of divinity hedge him around. The house in which he lives is not in sight of the park. He could not see the dancing lanterns that leaped skyward with the cries of "Banzai!" If he had wished to show himself to the people, there was no way. The people cheered him as an abstraction; yet a living abstraction to whom they entrust the direction of their personal affairs.—*Tokyo, Feb. 10th.*

. . . . . .

While Tokyo cheered, Baron de Rosen was packing his trunks. His departure had more than one pathetic side. He was personally fond of the Japanese. Like the French Ambassador in Berlin in 1870, this information, leaving inclinations out of the question, made him a peace man. Whether or not he, too, had told his country of the enemy's preparedness, and been scoffed at for his pains by his over-confident superiors, history may not yet relate. Weeks ago, when reports came from Port Arthur that Admiral Alexieff was convinced that there would be no war, people here wondered how he could so far misunderstand Japanese diplomacy.

Japan began hostilities of her own initiative. She carefully chose the hour of her first offensive blow. She may have expected to catch Russia unawares, but there is no reason why the Russian should have permitted her to. Japan played precisely within the letter of the law. Russia

had for years made capital out of promises. Japan made capital out of sudden decisive action.

For months before his departure the negotiations had been taken entirely out of De Rosen's hands. He was merely a messenger who carried letters from his Government to the Foreign Office, and saying, "Your Excellency, I have the honour to present—" he was gone. Aside from his official worries, he suffered the acutest pain from an ear affection. It is a saying in the diplomatic service that the legate to a country which declares war against his own is usually shelved. De Rosen may receive a small post; it is unlikely he will ever have another important one. With the knowledge that his career was closed, half ill, he had to wait four days in miserable loneliness in that massive brick Legation building which is now closed for How Long?

The news of the destruction of the *Variag* and the *Koreitz* at Chemulpo, of the occupation of Seoul, of the vital injuries to two battleships and a cruiser at Port Arthur, coming bit by bit, were brought to him while he was yet in the enemy's land, waiting helplessly on the date of the departure of the French steamer from Yokohama. While Japan's swift successes fairly electrified the air, his fellow-ministers, bound to avoid any reference to the war, had to pay their farewell calls when he knew that the actual sympathies of most of them were with the enemies of his country. From the Palace where

victory reigned came valuable presents in token of a royal adieu, without malice, borne by polite messengers to the house of defeat. Finally, the day of his going was the Japanese Fourth of July.

The train for Yokohama which the Baron chose went at nine the evening before the departure of the steamer. As the carriages passed out of the Legation gates, a faint murmur rose from the bystanders—a murmur of curiosity rather than assault. The police escort was scarcely needed. Tokyo, which has no slums, seems to have no mobs. The crowd which banked the open space the police made at Shimbashi Station was wholly quiet. Not alone the Legation people were there to bid him once more *bon voyage*, but many Japanese officials awaited his arrival in a room upstairs. It was an incident of the bureaucratic system which grinds to the same fineness on all occasions that the Ministers had to buy their platform tickets in due course.

From the station itself the crowd was entirely excluded. The train was the regular one going at that hour, and the usual stream of getas went clicking over the concrete to the second and third-class compartments. Two or three minutes before the gong was sounded, the Baron, looking ill and worn, leading, the Legation folk and the Japanese officials followed him to his compartment, where, after the Russians had entered, the others paused, and then bowed as the train pulled out, with no guard except a few soldiers in the compartment ahead of the

Baron's. A carriage met him at the Yokohama station, and the police saw him aboard the *Yarra*, which was to bear him to Europe. The next morning a few near friends were on the pier. He smiled to them as the steamer drew away, taking him out of a land that he liked and that liked him.

CHAPTER IV

TO THE FRONT

NEVER was parting guest more happy to go; never was parting guest more heartily and sincerely sped. With the correspondents of the first contingent actually away, the hopes of the second and the third rose to the dignity of expectations. They gathered at Shimbashi Station with tin horns, and gave the chosen few an Anglo-Saxon cheer. For over two months some of us have waited for official passes to join the Japanese army in the field. Now that we have the treasure it is not much to look at—only a slip of paper which would go into the average sized envelope. By rights, it should be on vellum, with marginal decorations of storks standing on one leg and an inscription of *summa cum laude* for patience in flourishes. Our thoughts, however, are not on such trivialities. They are entirely on how much each little pass will permit us to see.

"The Japanese were absolutely prepared for this war and all possible contingencies save one," said a secretary of legation in Tokyo. "They overlooked

the coming of a small army of correspondents representing the public opinion of two great friendly nations.

Nearly a hundred Europeans and Americans, used to entirely different food and conditions of life from the natives, turned a hotel into a barracks, and with persistent address asked for privileges from the Foreign Office. In time such a force each representing a competitive property, can wear even the Japanese smile of politeness down to a studied grimace. We had and have the conviction that the army would preferably have had neither correspondents nor attachés in the field. The lives, the millions of dollars, the national aims at stake were not ours; we came only by courtesy as foreigners. A correspondent kills no Russians; he may, if indiscreet, give information to the enemy. But the Foreign Office and even a higher power said that we must go. The time and manner of our going was perforce left to the General Staff. It was not a new situation in the world; that of a decision by the Government with execution left to a department. And the General Staff kept saying, "Very soon!" and bidding us be patient.

While tableau after tableau of success was unfolded by land and sea, and the rumour-mongers of the uncensored, unknowing, madly imaginative China coast met the demands of the press which wanted a battle every day, the men who wanted to see war in the field instead of through the bubbles

of gossip over Eastern bars, strode up and down the corridors of their hotel prison among tents, saddles and kits, like so many melancholy Danes—as if each were the Hamlet of the play.

At last the rampant curiosity of the spoiled children of the press, grateful for small favours, may feed itself on the sight of a Japanese soldier really marching toward an enemy in a disputed land. Now that we are started, we wonder what lies in store for us in this campaign of an Oriental power in a hermit land. The time of our return is shrouded in the mystery of the vicissitudes of a great war which has scarcely begun. The departure from Shimbashi, when an Anglo-Saxon hurrah broke the long record of *banzais* for departing troops, the parting of a dozen foreigners from their American and European friends, reminded us again of the romance and the picturesqueness of our position. There was never a war at all comparable to this, and never a war which drew so many foreign correspondents. The uncertainty of our position, the uncertainty of the conditions under which we shall live, brought a havoc of buying at the last moment on the part of men who have studied their requirements in the field while they waited. We have everything, from postage stamps done up in oiled paper to tool chests the size of a pocket-book.

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The small islands, for the most part barren and

rocky, which pepper the sea near the Korean coast line, have been a blessing to the Japanese in this war. They provide cover from storms for the numerous fleet of small transports, which three months ago were doing merchant service. Our own transport and our experience were typical. The *Suminoye Maru*, of a thousand tons burden, is thirty-three years old. She was bought in England when she was already past the A1 age limit of Lloyds. Ever since she has been running out of Hokkaido. She is as ship-shape as she is patched. Her Japanese skipper, who speaks English excellently, and with more than English politeness, served his apprenticeship before the mast on a sailing vessel out of Glasgow. The result is high tribute to his teachers. He cares for his ancient charge with the niceness of a family physician, wooing ten knots out of her rheumatic engine.

When a nor'-wester came up, soon after we left Chemulpo, he ran her behind one of the accommodating islands and dropped anchor. When the sea calmed he went out again, and this morning he brought us to Chenampo, that first port where the correspondent blessed with an official pass issued in Tokyo is permitted to land. Chenampo has been, and is, so far as we know, the main point of landing both for troops and supplies north of Chemulpo. The settlement that looks out upon the harbour is Japanese, and well isolated from the two near-by Korean villages by more than distance. It is the

outpost which the Japanese flag is following. From a trading and fishing hamlet the few rows of Japanese houses have risen to the dignity of officers' quarters for an army of invasion. Until we came, there was one foreigner who spoke some English—the German collector of customs. For weeks, supplies and soldiers have been forwarded into the interior with no other spectator except the Japanese and the Koreans.

From the steamer we could see the new unpainted barracks and store-houses which rose with the magic that forethought and preparedness command soon after the first transports dropped anchor. Beyond the piled stores, beyond the artillerymen scattered in the streets or taking their horses for exercise, there is nothing of the commotion to be expected of a great point of military debarkation.

In an hour in Chenampo you get an impression of the coming and passing race, clearer perhaps than you will have weeks hence. Here the little men are of the future, and the big men of the past. The two peoples are as distinct in type as Germans and Moors. Wherever you see a blue figure on the landscape it is Japanese, wherever you see a white figure it is Korean. The Korean never washes his body, and only washes his clothes occasionally. You are in a land of coolies and corrupt officials. All spend most of the time in the street. The race itself is characterless, listless, without colour. Through the mass rides one little Japanese artillery-

man or walks one little Japanese infantryman, and the natives look at him with a kind of stupid, preoccupied curiosity. The smart visitor in uniform came only yesterday, clearing the seas first of a European enemy. He could almost walk under the arm of one of the big Koreans who, erectly, patronizingly, saunter the street's length and back again, pipe in hand. Yet he could clear the town by lifting his finger. Giving way to the masterful race, the native, not making even the feint of resistance, still retains that stupidly impassive dignity.

"Let the Japanese come! We still wear white and do our hair up in knots on top of our heads, and thus you will see we lose nothing."

The Koreans are as non-committal about the coming of the Japanese as the average Briton about the tribal differences of the Fijians. Men and women dressing much alike, in their muddy-coloured white clothes, with feminine faces unfeminine, and masculine faces unmasculine, the Koreans seem a sexless people, begetting wonder that the race has not long ago ceased reproduction.

Some few—the few who understand—may realize the benefits which will result from Japanese occupation. The foreigner who lacks conviction need only go from the orderly and cleanly Japanese to the filthy native village. The officer commanding, who received us at his headquarters in a dwelling more modest than that which with true Japanese politeness he placed at our command, was Oriental

in his deprecation of how little he could do for us, and Teutonic in the exactness of his arrangements.

The arrival of the foreign correspondents is more interesting to the Koreans than the arrival of the Japanese. There were Japanese here before. As for the big noses, there was only the collector of customs, and now there are many others equally strange. The inn, whose lower floor some artillery officers vacated on our behalf, is such as every traveller in Japan knows well. The song of my typewriter has awakened the interest of the lady of the house, who is originally from Nagasaki. She has opened the sliding door, and, dropping on her knees with a courtesy to the correspondent (sitting on a blanket roll with a provision-box for a table), has pointed at the machine and said, "Shimbum" (newspaper). I told her she was right, and courtesied with the type spool in turn. It is a pleasure to find such a hostess and such a clean house in Korea. It is blessed, when your mission is to see a war, after many weeks of waiting in a peaceful capital, to be even as far as Chenampo, where patches of official blue enliven the muddy white of native monotony.

CHAPTER V

CATCHING UP WITH THE ARMY

THROUGH a land where a civilization only half matured and then withered has rotted through generations of decadency; where no man understands a horse, and men take the place of horses; where every inhabitant, high and low, is lousy; where filthy, corrupt officials have so long collected all surplus profits as taxes that subjects learn to avoid trouble by avoiding surpluses—through the sodden, hermit Korea runs a river of new life, to be fruitful with consequences that open all the vistas of conjecture and problematic discussion. By the old Peking Road—the valley following the path of ages of travel—by the same road down which the old conquerors came, down which civilization was introduced, the Japanese Army is moving. Only it moves in the opposite direction. For the first time since the Romans, the armed mission of a higher human organization has gone northward. In its wake, with its bulk in mass to strike the enemy, the army leaves the stations of its order and cleanliness; as significant

as the clean hospital attendants in the ward of helpless imbecility. The new may not be best, but it is so much better than the old as to silence all comparisons.

Two months ago it was the old Korea. Whatever happens now, it cannot be the old Korea again. The soldier's sudden change of a blow and a day has been wrought in the presence of those who have worked in the evolutionary way of an evangelist's patience and persistence. The river runs by a spot where continual drops of water have made some impression. In sanitary isolation above the sink of the old town (whose ancient, pagoda-topped wall has survived to the purpose of holding filth from contact with outer clay) are the houses of the missionaries of the American Presbyterian Board.

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On the road later I met a schoolmaster from Tokyo—a reservist serving with the battalion of sappers—trudging on very erectly and very sturdily under his heavy marching kit.

"Do you speak English?" he asked.

The question came like an unexpected wireless message from a friend on another ship at sea.

"Though I was fresh from town life, it was not the physical exertion of the private soldier which I found hardest to bear. My muscles soon hardened and the sores on my feet soon became calloused. The filth and the vermin are the terrible things. In

Ping Yang I was living in a miserable native house when I met an American missionary gentleman who provided me with clean quarters and a hot bath"—here his eyes glistened—"like I have at home."

Between travellers there is no bond after language like that of cleanliness. I walked my horse for some time beside the reservist, and chatted with him.

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Now in my travels I have seen many missionaries; and there are good missionaries and bad, just as there are good and bad blacksmiths and poets. Some missionaries become converted to the life of the country whose inhabitants they would convert, and, instead of being isolated heights, sink to the stale level of heathendom itself; some are proof of the old saying that the blood of the martyr is the seed of the Church.

The missionaries of Ping Yang are practising in truth the precepts of the devotion which recalled the ambition of their theological schooldays. What a town they dwell in!—a town where the human being lives as filthily as only one other animal, the swine, will; where the leather merchant lays his fresh pelt on the uneven stones of the main street, and from his doorway watches, through the dirty slits of his unwashed eyelids, its tanning by the tread of passing feet.

Yes, before the romance of this ancient city appeals to me, it must have a sewage system and

its inhabitants must submit to be buried in lye in order to give soap a purchase. You may search in vain among the peoples of the earth for a satire like that which clothes this race in white—a white that is hardly ever washed. Long ago an Imperial edict bade them put on white whenever royalty died; and royalty died so often that the rabbit folk saved expense most loyally by grieving for royalty all the time.

Such is Ping Yang; and in Ping Yang—the American flag beckoning me from the plain at the close of a journey in which, struggling, I had led my struggling horse through the mire from Chenampo—I found some simple American homes whose occupants patiently and hopefully, by example and argument, work for the betterment of their fellow-men. With them, while our horses rested, I spent an Anglo-Saxon Sunday. Early the next morning we began that ride to Kuroki's front which, for the individual correspondent, is as historical as battles to come will be for the world in general. There was no need of having the road pointed out to us. It lay where the line of coolies passed through the Northern gate. Like a dotted line on the map they marked the route of the army whose food they carried.

The Hermit Land and the Land of the Rising Sun might well be called the Land of the Burden Bearers. Korea excels in coolies as distinctly as Japan does in lacquer ware or China in tea.

Your native can carry more and lift or pull less than the average man of any other country. Like the hackney horse, this human being has literally been bred by generations to a special task. The young boy who brings firewood from the hills has his pack steadily increased until he reaches the adult's load at sixteen or seventeen years of age. The muscles that bear are developed at the expense of all others. Nourishment for his brain, the force for the natural aggressive characteristic of the male sex, all go into his back. He is as mild and as helpless as a milch cow with a load of 500 lbs.

If he owns a horse, the local officials may take it as a tax; but the local officials now can do no worse than to beat him. His capital in the world are the two crotch sticks of his packing frame and the straw ropes for fastening on his burden. His one luxury, his joy of living—his only reason for living, I should say—is his pipe, whose little bowl he fills at every opportunity. Bending under 120 lbs., he will trot out of line and back to his place in order to get a light at a wayside house.

Vanity of vanities! I recall when I followed the path of the Klondyke gold-seekers to Dawson, the pride of blue-eyed, fair-haired men, who belong to the most individualistic of races, about the weight of the packs which they carried over a short summit. The rabbit people, without the aggressiveness to say that their souls are their own, will carry twice as much all day without boasting.

The Japanese Government has been the easiest master that these coolies have ever known. It pays them good wages for a stated weight and a stated daily distance. The official, lying in wait for their earnings, wonders if the new order of things so prolific of graft shall not stay his hand. This type we occasionally saw striding about gravely in fairly white garments—his dignity broken only when the necessity to scratch compelled. A certain correspondent met one of these gentlemen on the road, and asked him the distance to a certain town. The official set out to write it in Chinese characters. The correspondent's face remaining blank, the Korean spat in contempt of one whose early education had been so signally neglected. Now, the correspondent had just walked up a steep, boulder-strewn hill: and the strangely-named place which, ten ri to the rear, was only five ri away, was not yet in sight. From the Korean gentleman came an odour as penetrating as a miasma. The temptation was irresistible. First observing that his hand was gloved, he brought it down with significant force on the top-lofty headgear of the Korean gentleman, and drove bird-cage and all fairly down over the official ears. The Korean gentleman disappeared over the hill with his white garments flying. The fact that probably he had never run before in all his life lent to the incident poetic justice. Retributive justice would consist in first giving all the ruling class, from the Emperor

down, fifty lashes, then setting them to mending the roads and, thereafter, importing horses and starting the country anew.

Most of the women of the land—and all the young women—had fled to the interior, and all the men had sought the public highway. It was in the period of the last days of winter idleness. The fields, with their last year's rice stubbles, were as yet unturned; and the brook-sides were just beginning to show green. If cash payments kept the rural population entranced for another two weeks, then the season's crops might suffer. By day, the temperature suited horse and man—spring air and spring sun. By night, the cold crept in gradually until at dawn it was in your marrow; and above the saddle-bags out of which we must live we had to tie blankets enough to keep us warm.

We must ride somewhere between 125 miles and 170 miles before we were on the scene of action. Was the army fifty miles this side of the Yalu? Or was it at the Yalu? Would the historic crossing or an historic attempt at a crossing be made before we should arrive? According to the traditions of war correspondence, we should have dashed. We had all the effort of dashing with the actual experience of crawling and the suspense that goes with it. My feelings were the same as when the Lake Shore train that was to connect me with the Transcontinental, Limited, that was, in turn, to connect with a Pacific steamer at 'Frisco was storm-bound. They

might wait the steamer; certainly they would not wait the battle. Carrying us, and our food and our warmth, our China ponies could make only from twenty-five miles to thirty-five miles a day over a highway whose only road commissioner had been the traffic of a thousand years. We nursed our steeds as an Arctic explorer nurses his rations. We dragged them up the hills, and led them down the other side. And from the summit we followed the winding grey streaks through the valleys, through the villages, towards one with a pagoda which stood for a name on the map which marked a milestone of our progress. In the distance the villages were white; but their white was like the white of the Korean's garments—a pitiful mask for filth which clogged the streets into which foul doorways opened. Our stages of progress were reckoned in Chinese li and Japanese ri and in kilometers, and, finally, in miles (by our own deduction). Kilometers are all very well in the abstract; but when the Englishman or the American counts his steps, he wants to know just how many miles he has gone, and just how many he has to go that day. A Chinese li is about as long as the native wants to make it. The li of Fusan is no relative of the li of Gensan, unless by coincidence. If the immemorial custom has made a distance of five miles thirty li, and a distance of ten miles twenty li in the same locality, no resident sees anything illogical in the fact. A Japanese ri is definitely about two and a half miles. A li is nomi-

nally one-third of a mile. We asked the Koreans in li, and they responded in ri. We asked the Japanese in ri, and they responded in li, while we practised the enunciation of l's and r's.

Contradictions as to distance were only equalled by contradictions as to where the army was and what it was doing. The officers guarding transport, busy with the affairs of their section, instead of having information to give, rather expected some from travellers who had come from the outside world. Their business was not to speculate on the work of other parts of the great system, but to be efficient in their own.

At a distance of from fifteen to eighteen miles apart were the étappes or stations, which the advancing force left behind. Piles of supplies stood at the doors of official yamens, and even blocked the tumble-down pagoda gates of approach. Around them swarmed white figures taking up a day's burden, or depositing it while they crowded into the houses in layers for the night. For all this there was one Japanese word. "Hetambo" was the *open sesame*. The humblest coolie understood it. To the commanding officer of a "hetambo" village we commended ourselves upon our arrival. As varied his hospitality, as varied the quarters at his command, so varied our fortunes. We had to thank the officers of the army that had gone before for warfare on vermin. In some places they had remained long enough to cover the filth-blackened walls with thin

sheets of rice paper. Always we felt that we need use only a modicum of insect powder. At the "hetambo" we had what was more important than food for ourselves—food for our horses. The knowledge at the end of the day that there were no saddle galls was equal to a repast.

Avoiding my diary, I will yet mention three days which stand out black-lettered on our journey; and one which stands out red-lettered. The first was that of our approach to Anju, when we took a "short cut" which proved "the longest way around." It was the pouring rain which made us dare the economy. At the rate of a mile an hour we plunged through the mud, and at the end of each hour Anju seemed as far away as ever. The second was that when we did the longest ride of all. At 6 p.m. our "hetambo" town was three miles away, so far as we could estimate; at 8 p.m. it was five miles away. Darkness found us on a treacherous road in a swamp. Finding the way, we led our horses till we saw lights, and the lights led us to piles of rice in their close-woven straw sacks at the familiar pagoda gate. But there were mitigating circumstances. The officer commanding the "hetambo" extended planters' hospitality. Our horses had a big, dry stable with plenty of fodder; we had a dry room which had been papered; a room that made it a pleasure to remove your boots, Japanese style, before entering; and in the morning a cleanly little soldier of Japan, all smiles, brought water for a bath—as if he knew that

bathing was the common ground of friendship between our two countries. I bathed; I shaved by the dawn's first light; I had slept with my clothes off, for the "hetambo" had blankets to spare; and I rode forth fresh for effort as for adventures. A bath and a shave—they give you at least another hour's endurance. On the third day we made a short ride. Tiffin time found us by the side of a mountain stream which ran clear and knee-deep over a gravel bed. I looked at that and at the white patches—Korean white—of my pony.

"That stream was meant for you and me, 'Pinto,' and in a corner of my saddle-bags I have a bit of soap for beast as well as man."

I undressed "Pinto" and then myself, and we washed. There was the feel of ice in the water. That was so much the better. For to bless the natural glow was the warmth—noon-day warmth—of the April sun which dried "Pinto's" coat, laundry white now, as he nosed his feed-bag and then nibbled green grass; while his owner, under the cloud of soiled clothes which he must put on, gave himself in nature's dress to nature's rest as he reclined on the cloth side of a rubber blanket. Verily, if it is pleasant, it is also good to wash, especially in Korea.
—*Wiju, Korea, April 23rd.*

CHAPTER VI

FIRST OPERATIONS AT THE YALU

WHEN I was sixty miles from Wiju, I heard that a battle had already been fought. Like all rumours, the terror of it was that truth must sometimes ride in rumour's company. With a road free of soldiers and thick with lines of straining coolies, twenty, thirty miles I rode, and still the same report, with the smile and "I don't know" of the quarter-masters, made scepticism grow into anxiety.

Then I saw on a hillside artillery horses and near by a battery; a mile further another battery; then two more, and how many more I shall not say. I no longer asked if there had been a general engagement, for there are not general engagements until the guns are up.

Uphill and downhill, into a region less thickly populated, where the forests of pine on the slopes—"Russian timber concessions"—were being sawed into bridge lengths to take a Japanese army into Russian dominion, horse and correspondent plodded on, till we reached the watershed and looked afar

upon the panorama of a mountainous land with a broad river flowing through it. Thereafter, young trees set thick as a hedge along the road when it ran at an angle, with screens of cornstalks hung overhead when it descended directly, told us that we were within sight of an enemy whom we would not have know the number of our men and guns.

Nature here has made a natural barrier of empire. To Korea and Manchuria, the Yalu is what the Great Lakes and the St. Lawrence are to the United States and Canada. Were there roads, the precipitous banks here would be an obstacle more than offset by fords higher up stream. An army, however, is tied to its transportation. Men who climb over untravelled ground must have their dinners and their blankets. The Japanese must keep to the road; the Russians must. Wiju is on the road, and so we shall cross at Wiju.

The situation of Wiju is typically Korean, with the water from the ascents making a stew of its own filth. You go downhill to approach it from any direction. Every house is unseen from the Manchurian side. A natural wall protects it from one shore at a point where the Yalu's waters pass in a single channel. Above and below, there are islands, low and sandy. This one point in the enemy's lines is an unassailable centre

Opposite from the Manchurian bank rises a bare and rocky bluff, "Tiger's Hill," with one high hump and one lower, like a camel that is kneeling. A

winding path leads between the humps. This is the only sign of human occupation, and no one ascends or descends it. Behind it, as the Japanese do in Wiju, the Russians may move as openly as if they were in a peaceful valley at home. Down the river and up the river, the banks on both sides are still high, and on the Japanese side are formed of ridges which are natural breastworks and earthworks. Shelter for reserves is ready to hand as if made to order.

Rare is the figure of the Korean. Dots, patches, and lines of blue uniform have taken the place of the peasantry who, in other times, would be showing spring activity. The only ploughing that is done is that of the engineers scarring the reverse slopes. The work in hand is war; the scene distinct in its cleavage from all gatherings of humanity. The hillsides where there have been only paths are cut by roads prepared for a battle's work, as the mechanics of the stage prepare for producing a play. In a word, this means mobility. The passage of a field gun must be made as easily as that of the theatrical star.

Whoever crosses the river with an army must possess the low islands either above or below the town. Once they are his, he may no longer screen the movements on his immediate front, and submits his force to shrapnel from the enemy's heights. Two of the channels below Wiju may be forded; the third must be bridged. If the Japanese are to

open the way into Manchuria by this route, the making of the bridge and crossing it in sufficient force to drive back the Russians (should they resist), form the diamond point of interest. It means more than a pass, for here the pass must first be built.

Our army of ants, with their guns, rifles, spades, bridge timbers, and pontoon sections, presses closer and closer to the river bank. No movement seems unpremeditated. No one among the 50,000 men fed by the coolie-strewn road who have settled down on this foodless region is ever idle. Instead of an army of soldiers, it is presently an army of navvies, so preoccupied with industry that it seems to resent the waste of the noon hour. The little man who strains under a timber, smiles as he goes; for every step is one against the enemy of his country.

We watch the roads; we watch the slopes from our camp; and we wait, devouring in one mood, despising in another, the rumours brought by the interpreters who made it possible for us to talk at all with our hosts. Perforce, the army's first work is to take the islands, in order to provide striking ground for the first action.

This morning, Captain Okada, a teacher in the Staff College at Tokyo, who is our mentor and censor, came to the correspondents' camp at 4 a.m. with word that an action was expected at daylight. You stumbled into your clothes, you stumbled out

of your tent, with field-glasses over one shoulder and flask over the other, and a piece of chocolate in your pocket. As your eyes strained to make out the path in the darkness, you felt the cold night mist on your face. From a hill where you waited for dawn, you could see the outline of other hills, and in the valley something dark—the town.

There, expectant, in the oppressive stillness, one looked toward the East for the sunrise and listened for the rattle of musketry. It began far away on our right in volleys, as company after company of a line pulled their triggers. It was not a heavy fire: it signified only a skirmish or the morning "constitutional." The moment of "darkness before dawn" was theatric, as if the lights of a stage were turned down and then up. One second you could see nothing. Half a minute later, only the mist hanging in the valleys and cut by the heights shut out the view.

The firing soon died away. We were told afterwards that the Japanese had rushed and taken one of the islands far down the river. There was nothing for us to do except to look at the positions. The reaches of the river below the town were visible from the ridge where Captain Okâda "guarded" us.

On the first island, now held by the Japanese, we could see the infantry in their trenches, and the details for water and wood and provisions going and coming. There were no signs of an assault by

them. On the next island is the custom-house and a small village, which needed no Goldsmith to sing its desertion. So far as we could see, not a soul was in sight on the whole Russian front except a Russian officer, who rode up and down on his trotting Cossack pony. Was he riding along an intrenched line or not? To the onlooker it seemed as if the Japanese might easily cross over and take possession of the empty houses. But a gun is silent till it speaks. Later, we had a foretaste of what might happen if the Japanese should rise from their cover.

At the summit of the path leading over the Tiger's Hill between the two humps, were visible three figures, the only others besides the itinerant horseman which indicated the presence of an enemy. At intervals one of the three would bend over and the other two would stand back. Then there was a puff of smoke, and a shell went flying down the river. Where it burst you could not tell. The solitary horseman rode back again. Some reserves near by were formed in line and marched away.

Ever this is the Land of the Morning Calm, where the still cold of night breaks into the still warmth of day. As I counted the seconds from the time of the Tiger's Hill gun-fire till we heard its report (in order to judge the distance), I could hear no sound in this area where two armies faced each other except the ticking of my watch.

Directly from the cover of the Tiger's Hill two companies of Cossacks rode out widely deployed. They were a fair mark; too fair a mark. The Japanese are not so naïve in the art of war as to disclose their gun positions on such slight temptation. Our artillerists wait. Where their guns are no foreigner knows. Where some of the Russian guns are, we learned before the day was over.

Just opposite Wiju itself a number of Japanese engineers were building a bridge over to the first island. They went about their work in a methodical way, as if their task was the most natural and commonplace thing in the world. They crossed back and forth in boats with supports, and they laid planks with seeming unconcern, as seen through the glasses, when probably they were making every minute count. The doubts or worries of the bridge-builders did not occur to the spectators on the heights, who saw simply so many moving figures, ascertained their object, and passed to other things. They had the advantage of an army of offence. Either the Russian had to unmask some of his batteries, or allow them to make headway. He acted on his decision as to which was the lesser of the two evils with a burst of shrapnel, which made the bridge-builders scatter for cover like girls in lawn gowns out of the rain. That was the work of a few moments—an incident of warfare. So was the diversion of the Russian battery's attention to the town, where circles of blue smoke from

bursting shrapnel hung fleecily in the air and then were blown away, and the bits of iron that rained in the streets formed the first souvenirs of the conflict that is to come.—*Wiju, Korea, April 27th.*

CHAPTER VII

CROSSING OF THE YALU

I HAD been at Wiju three days when my friends and guides, the guns, began to arrive. They were parked near our camp. Every morning I looked out of my tent door to make sure they had gone no farther. I saw the artillerymen starting out at dusk with their spades; I noticed spots on the hillsides where the earth had been freshly turned in preparation for an expected guest. Finally, on the morning of the 29th (April), I saw that the guns and limbers had been swung into position ready for the teams, and that night I heard the rumble of their wheels as they took the roads which branch in every direction from the main highway.

If this were not enough, there ran through the whole army the tremor which is unmistakable. This or that minor operation will cause a flutter of expectancy which a bare report and exaggeration may make portentous. When the hour of a great movement is at hand, nothing can keep the secret which runs from man to man like some magical fluid. Before the guns began to move we had

heard infantry fire at the right—that sacred right where no one except the officers and soldiers whose duty took them was allowed to go.

On the night of the 29th we heard that the Japanese had effected a crossing. For this news, so far as we had known, we might have had to wait for weeks, or we might have had to wait only for hours. The distance was not more than four miles, and the average citizen may ask why we did not ride to the spot and find out for ourselves. The correspondents are a part of this military organization in that they may go only where they are told. While the army is ordered into the fight, we are ordered to keep out of it. At four in the morning came the word from headquarters with the modest information that by going to a certain place we might see something of interest. The certain place gave one a view varying from one to ten miles.

On the way from camp no sign left any doubt in your mind that the great day had come. Where the guns had been on the more distant slopes were only a few transportation carts parked; where regiments had been encamped were only the ashes of camp-fire and sward that had been pressed by sleeping forms neighbour to that which the artillery horses had ploughed with restive hoofs. Over another rise, and you saw the lines of marching men moving steadily to the position where they were to be at call if wanted. A glance along any one of the roads which the army had built to lead

up to its positions, told its story of a movement in force.

"There will be some artillery practice," said a Japanese officer politely, and he smiled the Japanese smile.

It was a knoll high among its fellows to which the correspondent was assigned. There he could see everything except the one thing he wanted to see. Where was it that the Japanese had crossed? The bluffs to the right hid the upper reaches of the river, and you looked to the west as you had before. You saw the town of Wiju once more under the morning mist, with the tower on the bluff that hid it from the Manchurian bank. Near by the gunners of a battery lay in their casemates, bathing themselves in the first rays of the sun. Beyond were more shelving hills dipping to the river's edge, while the spreading stream made channels around low sandy islands. Those the Russians had held they had burned and evacuated yesterday. But the Japanese had not occupied them. Their line was still to be seen like a blue flounce to the line of willows that furnished them cover.

Only the creak of axles along the roads could be heard while we waited for the beginning of the great game. We saw orderlies going with the messages to the guns, and then we saw a flash from one of the bluffs, where a Japanese battery was concealed. Others followed, but you saw them not; you looked to see where the first shell struck.

A wreath of blue smoke broke over some undergrowth where the Russians had a trench with the same flash as a sky-rocket, but with the difference that wickedly it spelled death instead of frolic, and a man resurrected from the age of crossbows would know instantly that it did.

There is nothing in our every-day life comparable with shrapnel fire except lightning: it is the nearest thing to it that a human being can produce, and has the same awful theatricalism. As few men are killed by shell fire, so few are killed by lightning. The soughing of the fragments of a shrapnel are those of the wind through a telegraph wire multiplied a thousand times and raised to a high key. It sometimes seems to a recruit like a file-tined fork scooping out his stomach, and scraping the vertebræ of his backbone. Such are his feelings then that his legs will not lift him out of his trench, or, if they will, they carry him to the rear.

I was thinking of these things, and of how neither force was composed of veterans, when the Japanese guns turned their attention to what we called the "conical hill battery," because of the shape of the rise on which it was placed. From the first the conical hill battery had been saucy; from the first it got something like the worth of the money which brings guns and ammunition 6,000 miles from Russia to the Yalu. These disturbers of the peace dropped shells into Wiju

without an "After you, gentlemen," on a quiet routine afternoon, as the first signal of their presence. They informed the Japanese line on the lower islands what they might expect if they advanced. So far as we knew, there might be others where they came from. When they pleased they could shell the town, but the Japanese gunners were content to bide their time and let them. The hour had come when our side might pay off old scores with the unerring aim of days of calculation. A little tardily, but with good practice, as gunners call good killing, the conical hill battery came into action this morning.

"We've been waiting for you—for you," the Japanese guns seemed to say, and they let go. They covered the position with shrapnel rings which hung still in the clear air, till so fast and thick was the fire in that circle that you saw only the flashes through the smoke. If the Russians would shoot they could not see. A rain of fragments overhead was not enough. The howitzers on the island to the right held by the Japanese pumped percussion after percussion into the earth, and dust rose to join the smoke.

The one on the conical hill was not the only Russian battery or the only object of Japanese fire. The outnumbering guns of the Japanese, so excellently manned, made the odds in this duel seem unfair. But as long as the enemy has a weapon in his hands and has not signalled his surrender, the

business is to kill. War is the most unsportsmanlike of games.

Rarely were all the Japanese guns in action; there was no need of it. There were minutes when you heard a score of explosions; there were other minutes when you heard the talk of the reserves, who, with rifles stacked, rested on the slopes of the valley at your feet.

Intent on watching the guns, one forgot the direction where the hills hid the stream itself, but not the bank—where the crossing—report said, had been made. Here the hills on the opposite bank were without batteries, while our own above Wiju shot across to the heights to the westward.

Sweeping casually the Russian side of the upper reaches of the river with the naked eye, one saw something denser than a shadow that seemed to be moving. A look through the glasses, and the programme of the day's work was as clear as what had happened. On the Russian left (up the river) the bank rises in a precipitous rocky formation to a height of a thousand feet. At the base is a path and a line of sand left by the falling current. Stretching along this for a mile or more, like so many blue pencil marks on brown paper, were the Japanese.

Any Russians above them could have done more damage with tumbling boulders than with rifle-fire. They were under a shelf. They could be reached only by shooting straight down the stream, and had

gun or rifle ventured this, they would have found no cover save the smoke of shrapnel from the batteries which would have sent them back. The crossing of the Yalu had been effected by a few rounds of musketry fire. The impregnable position of the enemy had become cover and protection for the Japanese advance.

That line kept breaking into sections, which scrambled up ravines to the heights and disappeared. That which meant most we had seen at simple route marching. The thing which meant most to us the spectator now saw accomplished in a tableau. We turned from it to the guns, which fired whenever a mark showed itself. At three in the afternoon we saw our hill-climbers again—some of them. They had gone over the heights and were under cover of a knoll opposite Wiju. One may say that the Japanese guns, numerous, well-placed, withholding their fire till the great day, accomplished the crossing of the Yalu; one may say that the crossing was the result of a feint on the left and a movement on the right; one may say many things. The Japanese always intimated that they meant to cross below Wiju on the left. They had crossed above Wiju in the war with China. But the fords were uncertain and tortuous. We even heard from our interpreters of a magnificent, if not warlike, plan of building a pontoon under fire. This the Imperial Guard (our centre), fully expecting to lose half their number, were to cross while the left

made a lodgment for flanking purposes further down stream. As I have remarked, correspondents were permitted to look at the lower part of the river all they pleased.

This movement, like all others, resolved itself into the old essentials. There was less strategy than tactics. Why the islands up the river had been chosen for the point of crossing was plain enough when, from the tents of headquarters, on the evening of the 30th, I saw the bridges which had been built joining two islands across narrow and sluggish currents. Once arrived on the other bank, the storming party were not in a pocket, as they would have been below Wiju, but had safe breathing space under cover. They could go over in the night and be ready for work in the morning.

This crossing was used in the war with China, and now again in the war with Russia, because it was the strategically natural one. The simple principles of strategy must remain the same. Upon *personnel* and execution depend success. In the hour when the faculties are dazed with the mass of incident and the memory crowded with kaleidoscopic scenes, every fresh consideration brings a fresh tribute of praise to this feat of military workmanship. It is clear enough now why the general did not want us to see the ends of his lines, or whither the timbers and the planking for the bridges were borne after they disappeared behind the knolls following the military roads. His line was far

shorter than any one had supposed. The river itself protected his flanks. Within a radius of ten miles his whole army was held ready to throw over the river in force, unwearied by marching. His success was his preparation. His fortune was the weather, which made the water in the Yalu low; which gave his gunners clear air; which gave his men dry ground to sleep on and dry clothes to sleep in.

There is a word which has possibly been used in every despatch sent from the front, and that is "precision." No word can take its place. Whether in the arrangement of transport or in the accuracy of gun-fire, it expresses the work of this army. We who have seen manœuvres where hitches if not blunders ever occur, are prepared for greater ones in actual battle. The movement of the 29th of April on the banks of the Yalu was like a field-day (if you can imagine such a thing) where the troops had been taken over the positions beforehand, and every detail rehearsed with the care of a wedding ceremony. From the time that coolies were set to sawing bridge planks far to the rear, and the first outpost was placed and the first sod turned for a road or a gun position, the Japanese army seemed to know precisely what it had to do, and just how it was going to do it. From the headquarters with its Japanese smile no information came, and the barrier to inquiry was ever that of Oriental politeness. The contention that a modern army cannot keep its secrets and have correspondents in the field was

made ridiculous by the Japanese success in this respect. It can never be used again to excuse military incompetency. The years of preparation for a set task made in Tokyo (which might mean little in practice) became in application and execution as pattern-like as theory itself.

Of Kuroki, the man who directed operations on the spot, we have had occasional glimpses. He is sturdily built, sinewy, with no spare flesh, and has a clean-shaven, square jaw. In the days of waiting, when no man knew where or how we were to cross, or what forces the Russians had, and he alone knew all—quite all, staff officers knowing only each his part—one saw him walking by himself among the trees of the groves which he and his staff occupied, and again with a telescope on a prominence, watching his own troops rather than the positions of the enemy—watching and smoking.

I have said that fortune favoured him. I should have added that nature also favoured him. The hills running toward the bluff, which descends sharply to the river, held valleys between their heights which were meant to mask an army's movements. And the Japanese engineers knew how best to make Nature serve their purpose. They least of all, in an army which shirks no amount of tedious labour to gain an object, were inclined to spare any pains. Before the troops and the guns advanced, every point of the road where it might have been visible from the Russian side had been

screened by fences of cornstalks and of young trees cut near their roots and set in the ground. Where the descent was at right angles to the river itself, aprons of grass and weeds had been hung. You could have driven a battery of artillery the length of the miles of hidden roadway freshly constructed without once showing it to the enemy.

Riding back from headquarters to camp, you left the army behind as abruptly as the walls of a town. Roads, screens, gun positions had served their purpose. The hillsides were swept clean of human occupation. No *débris* was left behind. There never is in the path of the Japanese. In Wiju, whose houses only the day before had held all the Japanese that could be packed on their floors, open windows and doorways stared at you. The quiet was as intense as the crack of a shrapnel is sharp. —*Wiju, Korea, April 30th.*

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CHAPTER VIII

BATTLE OF THE YALU

WE had expected that the battle would come with the crossing, but the two were entirely distinct. The crossing was effectively secured on one day (April 30th), and the battle occurred on the next (May 1st). The account of the one I have already sent. Draw a line approximately north and south through Wiju, and both banks to the east were already in possession of the Japanese on the night of the 30th. Opposite Wiju the Ai River joins its waters to those of the Yalu. On its bank the right flank of the Japanese rested at the end of the first day's movement. All that night troops were crossing into China till morning found Korea without the army that had been a self-invited guest for many weeks.

If the spectator on this famous 1st of May had some idea of what he was going to see, the vagueness of that idea added to the interest. He knew that the day before had been one of the great days of his life, and expected that this would be another. Rising at dawn becomes second nature when you

are with an army. As I rode through the south gate of the city, Captain Okada, who has the correspondents in charge, looked at his watch and asked if the others were close behind. He was a little worried, like a man who has guests to dinner. There was to be a charge, and the time for it was almost as exactly set as that for the rising of a theatre curtain.

The bluff above Wiju was no longer forbidden to the correspondent. Lifting your glasses to see what new tableau this ever-prepared army—that shows you nothing till it is finished—had in store for you, no glance was wasted on Tiger's Hill, which rises out of the river's bed to the height of 1,000 feet or more. Its sides are precipitous. On a first thought, it seems an impregnable position of defence. But if infantry could not storm these steep rock-ribbed ascents, no more could infantry escape down them. To take Tiger's Hill the Japanese had only to march around it.

In the dark ages of Europe a robber baron would have built his castle on such an eminence, and defied and ruled all the country round. In this conflict it was in the centre of an artillery duel, with shells flying about its ribs, but none fired at it or from it. On the other side of Tiger's Hill there is a sandy bottom, and the Ai River, flowing between heights, here enters the Yalu. On the western side of the Ai the high bluffs, with the broken skyline above and the stretch of river sand below, continue till

they disappear in the haze. Four or five miles from the mouth of the Ai are the white walls of a little village, Ku-lien-cheng. From this village runs the main highway toward Feng-wang-cheng and Liaoyang, which the armies must follow.

This, then, was the position of the Russians who had evacuated the broad sandy islands in the river below Wiju two days before. They had formed on the road. The ease with which the Japanese had crossed on the previous day above Wiju, surprising the Japanese themselves, led to only one conclusion. The Russians had not intended to give battle at the Yalu. All that they sought to gain was delay which should fatten the numbers of their guns and men at the point where they should make a stand. Whenever they could force the Japanese to elaborate preparation for a general attack they had gained days, perhaps weeks, for their overworked railroad. Every mile the Japanese travelled inland was a mile further for the Japanese and a mile nearer for the Russians to the all-commanding thing of all armies —the base of supplies. That the Russians would fall between the two stools of a general defence and simple delaying tactics was not contemplated.

At the end of the first day you thought that all was over except deploying to brush the hills clear of the rear-guard. But the second day held a surprise for the Russians and for the Japanese. For the Russians the annihilation of two regiments and the loss of twenty-eight guns, as reported. For the

Japanese this made a success that was unexpected. The spectators are still in doubt whether to marvel most at Russian carelessness or at the marching power of the Japanese infantry.

On the night of April 30th the Japanese occupied the islands the Russians had evacuated and crossed in force. The morning of May 1st showed us clearly the Russian position, how it was to be taken, and the force that was to take it. Along the crests of the Russian heights you could see the dust-coloured line of the Russian trenches from 300 to 500 feet above the river bed. The trenches were long enough to hold a great force. They might be manned by 1,000 or by 10,000 men, who rested for the moment in peace and security, with their antagonists as clearly outlined before them as the streets of a town to a balloonist.

Every man there must have known that in the end he must fly. Meanwhile he must take as great a toll of lives as silent rifles, with magazines filled, and waiting on the triggers' call, could command when they should speak. On the sands below, distinct to the naked eye, the cones of two field hospital tents bespoke preparation for what the Russian rifles could give. Not a man of the Japanese lines needed a doctor at that moment. In an hour thousands might, the numbers all dependent upon the size of the force hugging the dusty line on the Russian heights. All was to be real in this drama of the meeting of two organized

groups of men who had marched far and carried heavy loads and lived on hard rations for the privilege of mutual destruction.

Lining the wall of Wiju, perfectly secure from fire, were the unwashed, non-committal Koreans, whose land was one of the subjects of contention. (When I crossed the river the next day, the first man I saw was another subject of contention—an old Chinese sifting out of the sand and ashes the parched remains of the grain from the ruins of his house, which the Russians had burned.)

In the Japanese line were some 35,000 men forming an intact blue streak from up the Ai-ho to Ku-lien-cheng. They would remain as stationary as trees till the order came which should set them in motion as one machine toward the Russian position. Without glasses this line seemed no more than a long fence hung with blue, the Russian position only an uninhabited height, where storms, perhaps, had eroded the summits. Between the two, over the stretch of sands where the skirmish line and the reserves were to pass, and on the further channel which they were to ford, was no moving object. It was a zone free of life which soon would be the scene of human activity that would hold the attention of the world—a stretch of river-bottom where was to be made the first infantry charge of account in the most picturesque of modern wars.

Before the charge began the onlooker had time

to realize that he was about to witness a frontal attack with modern weapons, which many tacticians hold to be no longer practicable. The Japanese infantry had been marching and hill-climbing all the day before. Those who had slept at all had slept little. Some had spent the night in getting into position. Now they ate their rations of rice and fish, and lay packed close in the convolutions of the river-bed, seeing the long levels that they had to cover at the double, and the heights they had to conquer—a task set sternly before them in the clear light of morning.

Their guardians, the guns, still had suspicions of the conical-hill battery that had been pounded to silence on the 30th. They spat fire with the viciousness of bitter memory. No answering flash broke through the columns of dust tossed up by the common shell from the Japanese howitzers or the blue smoke rings of the shrapnel. The skirmishers had sprung to their feet, company after company of that line four or five miles long had deployed, and yet our breathless waiting brought no gun-fire from the enemy's heights.

Had the Russians entirely withdrawn their guns over night? If they had, then they meant to make no proper defence; they sought only to force the Japanese to make a battle formation; to gain time for the increasing army on their chosen ground for decisive resistance. Or were the Russian guns waiting for a fairer chance? This was a dramatic

possibility, but it did not stand to reason. The frontal attack was to have no savage test. We were to see more of a field-day than a battle, you thought, not counting on the determined resistance of the Russian infantry unassisted.

With smokeless powder, with field guns of the latest pattern, with all other modern accessories, we had two armies not in khaki. Every Japanese soldier on this arena was as sharply defined as pencil marks on white paper. Could the mind have worked rapidly enough through the glasses, one might have counted them all. With reserves crowding in, they became like a young orchard. For the first fifteen minutes there was no rifle-fire. Was it really war, or was it only manœuvring? We listened for the rattle of musketry; at any second we expected to see some of the figures fall. With the undulations of the ground and individuals avoiding bad footing, the line would grow bunchy in places, and then thin out again to better skirmish order.

But the units were much closer than the order of either the British or American armies. The Anglo-Saxons were seeing the German theory tried—the German theory of numbers, and pressing the attack home in face of the enemy's fire, as against ours of widely separated units and flanking manœuvres. If there were 5,000 Russians in the trenches on the heights, it seemed that they ought to mow that river-bed clean of Japanese.

Such was the distance that the line seemed to go ahead from the steady impulse of mechanics instead of being carried by human legs. Their double seemed a creep. At one and the same time you wanted them to hasten in order to bring on the dramatic finale, and you wanted them to wait in order to give you time to grasp in full the panorama they afforded. They had two miles to go, with sand to their ankles in many places. The first rifle-fire came from far to the right, up the Ai-ho, where the end of the Japanese line was obscured.

Along the trench on the Russian heights we could still see the Russian officers moving back and forth. They were not nervous for the fight to begin, while they kept their men in tune with majestic opportunity. Soon we heard the crack of their rifles and the answering volleys of the Japanese, who lay under cover of the drifts in the sand between their rushes. No faltering among the Japanese was evident, but you knew, you felt, even from the distance of the Wiju wall, that there the fire was hot. Something in the attitude of the advancing figures said as much. They were bending to their task as if at pulling ropes. For it was work now.

You turned from the effect to the cause, and, despite that living, pushing line of human flesh on the river bottom, you scanned only the heights, trying to count the heads above the dust-covered streak of the Russian ridge.

Such is the concentration of thought and gaze

in the development of one particular phase of such a spectacle, that you may be missing completely something new and vital to the whole which is passing at the other end of the field.

How long had they been coming? I wondered when I first saw black objects about a foot high under the glasses scattered and running like men out of the rain—out of safety into danger they were in fact—over a knob at its left and plunging into the Russian trench. This was the greatest moment of all. Here were reinforcements; here was a prospect of resistance that provided another thrill in the drama. Every rifle added to the speaking ones in the trench meant more patients for the surgeons waiting in the hospital tents for the first arrivals.

Here, too, was a mark to gladden the heart of the artilleryman. How long before the gunners would see it? Or was not the knob in the range of their vision? If not, they must soon receive the signal from those who could see. There were no longer 35,000 men about to assault a position. Nothing except batteries and some Russians running across a knob into a trench—where they were to go through hell in order to keep an enemy in check for a quarter of an hour. Still they came, still the guns said nothing in protest. Seconds became minutes.

The altitude was great; the range was new. When the word was passed the shooting was the worst I have ever seen Japanese gunners do.

Higher and higher they lifted the bursts, which still did not reach the mark, while the Russians kept on coming as unmindful as if shrapnel were fireworks. "That surely will be high enough," the gunners must have thought with each discharge, only to find that it fell short. They kept on lifting and lifting them—a progress of explosions up the hillside—till finally the blue smoke of a shrapnel curled fairly over the heads of the targets. The Russians paid no attention to that or the next or the next. Then one exploded a little over them and a little in front of them, so that they got the full benefit of its spread.

And now all the guns had the range. Common shell tossed the earth skyward; shrapnel was scattered from above. Like so many paper figures under a bellows, one burst blew a half-dozen Russians down. Then we saw no more except those who came out to bring in the fallen. The dare-devil Slav had taken the straight path, while the breaking roar of muzzles mocked his temerity. Afterwards we learned that he could have gone round under cover, but that would have lacked *aplomb*, which is important in old-fashioned war.

Unremittingly the Russians held to their task. The Japanese line, which had moved out in a semi-circle to envelop the whole Russian position, had to deal with the situation as it developed. The adversary's defence had been outlined exactly. Every man on the plain knew the limits of its length. At

either side of this trench were ravines leading up to either end.

The most natural human instinct—or animal instinct, for that matter—will seek to get an opponent on the hip, that is, on the flank. Pressing under cover of the heights, we soon saw a column passing up either ravine. In the feat of reaching the base of the heights there had been no faltering step. It was done with such drill-ground exactness that the dropping units seemed a part of the evolution. Those who pressed up the ravines were only a part, a sensibly delegated part, while the extreme left of the line filed on into the little town of Ku-lien-cheng, and the right—we saw little of the right, which extended up the Ai River, thought little of it in the occupation of nearer impression, little anticipated the part it was to play before nightfall.

What we asked then was: Did those in the trench know of the streams of blue coats, either with a big Japanese flag at its head marking every foot of ascent like an indicator?

Mindless of fire as of raindrops, a solitary Russian officer now stood on the parapet stiff as a watch-tower. A shell-burst sent him down for a moment; but he came back. It was plain that he was counting the minutes and proposed to use every one with the vengeful opportunity it gave. The ravine at the right was deep enough to show only occasional moving blue spots, and always that defiant flag which rippled and rose and fell with the colour-

bearer's scramble over the rocks. The flanking column at the left had arrived on the summit of a broad knoll certainly not more than 500 yards from the trench. There with Japanese precision, they were nicely forming into close order preparatory to a rush. But their rush was never made. One of those accidents—those keen, murderous satires frequent in great engagements—dealt this flock of warring humanity a crushing blow from its own side.

Deftly the Japanese gunners had covered the Japanese advance; now the black powder used in the howitzers showed its inferiority to the Shimose powder of native invention, which, such is its evenness of quality, will with the same length of fuse land shell after shell in the same place in a manner that seems superhuman in its application of theoretical mechanics. The charge did not carry the howitzer's projectile as far as mathematics—war is made by mathematics in these days—indicated that it should. At the edge of the closely formed men on the knoll, a column of earth and smoke flew skyward. We saw the scattering of forms through the dust; the disruption of a mass into its parts, and before the air was clear—fired before the result of the first was apparent—came a second shell.

Down the hillside the blue figures came running—not out of lasting panic, because they immediately re-formed. Sixteen blue spots we counted prostrate behind them. Within a stone's throw of where the

Russians had gone out to pick up their own wounded, some of the Japanese, with the common gallantry that makes bitter enemies akin, ran back to their fallen comrades one by one. Some they knelt over for only a moment; these were beyond help. Others they knelt over at length, applying "First Aids." The next day we counted eleven new-made graves with wooden tablets on this spot. A few already had sprays of plum blossoms stuck in the fresh earth. It is cherry blossom time in Japan now, and plum blossoms are grateful in this strange land. These deaths were tragic sacrifices to a protecting fire, yet in the great game of the general conflict they counted for little beside the lives the guns had saved in silencing the enemy's fire.

Could the Russian officer, that sentinel unmoved amid the lightnings, have seen this accident it might have meant a streak of silver for his cloud. Was the flag at the head of the storming-party at the right also hidden from his view? He remained so long that his surprise and capture seemed certain, and I think that there was no member of the Japanese staff—such is courage's admiration for courage—who did not hope that one Russian might have the deserved reward of escaping unharmed. He must have been the very last to go, steadying his men—his big, helpless, untutored, fair-haired children—with his own rock-ribbed fearlessness. One moment you saw him still and

erect, a lone figure poised between the forces of two empires. Then he was gone.

The flag which had zigzagged and bobbed up the ravine appeared at the end of the trench. That climber, the colour-bearer, was not too out of breath to walk the length of the trench, swinging aloft his flag in order that all on the plain below might see that he had arrived.

It was not yet ten o'clock. Less than three hours had been occupied in a business which you had seen as a whole with panoramic fidelity. It was like seeing Look-out Mountain fought without the mists. You wanted the charge made over again, and made slower to give you more time for appreciation. You had seen the reality, and at the same time you felt a detachment from it which was at once uncanny and unsportsmanlike. The spectator had been as safe as in an orchestra chair when carnage reigns on the stage. It was as if a battle had been arranged for him, and he had been taken to the best position for seeing its theatrical effects.—*Antung, Manchuria, May 3rd.*

CHAPTER IX

AFTER THE YALU—HAMATAN

NATURE would have called the morning's task a day's work finished. Nature would have said to the colour-bearer and all the men behind him, "Well, you've done it; you are here, now rest." What followed recalls the remark of a Japanese officer some time ago, that the Japanese hoped the mobility of their infantry would offset the dash of the Cossack horsemen.

These little men, who had been ceaselessly at work for thirty-six hours, were only beginning the day. That supreme test of an army, when fatigue is the accomplice of a breathing spell to enjoy victory, was met by this army with the smile—the Japanese smile. It followed the book as it always does. It followed up its advantage with stubborn persistence.

When the infantry disappeared over the hills there remained the dead and wounded and the busy surgeons and our silent guns. As the crow flies, it was under two miles to Ku-lien-cheng. But to reach it we must go through the town and up the

river and then across, where the first lodgment was made, and through the river sands around Tiger's Hill, and ford the Ai-ho. The thought that one might now see the trenches where the Russians had fought, might go into the position of the conical-hill battery, and come nearer to the infantry fire of the pursuit, called you regardless of tent and equipage in the rear.

But Captain Okada passed the word that we were to return to camp. That was a blow whose magnitude we, who had come 12,000 miles, were to realize bitterly. At the time, we thought, as he said, that it might "all be over." But the tragic and picturesque feature was yet to come. I think that the captain is sorry now that he hesitated lest he should outstrip his authority. If he is not, I tell him that he ought to be.

That night in the little Chinese village of Ku-lien-cheng, where the staff had established itself, the cable correspondents who crossed the river with their despatches saw the aftermath of battle in its reality of detail. Russian prisoners were brought in with the news of twenty-eight guns captured. Russian officers stood around the camp-fire with the members of the victorious General Staff. Russian wounded waited with the Japanese wounded their turn at the operating table. Surgeons, nodding for want of sleep, had a harvest of vital cases.

With the information which the Japanese staff now has at hand, the disaster at Hamatan would

be explainable only when you know the contempt a white man may have for a yellow man, the character of Siberian garrisons, and the nature of some old commanders who have nodded over their *samovars* through long service in time of peace. Five miles from Ku-lien-cheng, at the mouth of the Yalu, is Antung, a prosperous town, one of the new open ports which Russia would prefer to have closed. Over the coast rise, in that range which extends continuously to Liaoyang, Feng-wang-cheng is reached by a road from Antung which joins the one from Ku-lien-cheng. That by Ku-lien-cheng is the old Peking road, which means nothing in its favour as a highway except that it is an old route of travel. Small gunboats may approach within range of Antung. Any force of size intending to resist firmly the crossing of the Yalu must have had both roads in condition for retreat and roads leading across the Ai-ho to their works on the upper reaches of the river in order to facilitate the movement both of guns and men.

Of course, the first essential of any force on the defensive is a scouting service, which will, at least, keep it informed of the enemy's actual advance in all directions; and the second is facility for a rapid movement to reach the point where the enemy develops his attack. Our best judgment is that the Russians had at the Yalu 10,000 men, with perhaps 5,000 on the road in reserve, while the Japanese had a total of 40,000. Such disparity

made the ultimate arrest of an effective crossing out of the question. The art was that the Japanese made their lodgment on the opposite bank without any loss approaching the toll that 500 infantry properly placed could have laid.

Zassulitch seems to have concluded early in April that the Japanese would attempt a landing at Antung from transports. Along the water front he built deep timbered bomb-proof trenches. On the hills at back of the town he constructed excellent gun positions, with good approaches from the road leading to Feng-wang-cheng, which he had re-outlined with better grades in places, and in others repaired according to the regulation requirements for the proper retreat of artillery and wheeled transportation. At the water front of Antung itself the river is so deep that a disembarkation of infantry would actually have to be made in bodies on shore instead of in the shallows with deployment at a distance. In short, the Russians seemed to have been mesmerized by Antung. They were not to be surprised there or flanked from that direction, whatever happened elsewhere.

Coming down to the immediate period before the crossing, despite all the Japanese cleverness in screening their movements, it seemed impossible that the Russians could not have apprehended by field observation that the Japanese were gathering a great force at Wiju. The Japanese method of keeping their secrets from outside communication

TRENCH BUILT BY RUSSIANS AT ANTUNG AND NEVER USED

was simple and drastic. For a week before the battle Korea was sealed. No telegrams, no letters were allowed to depart. In her harbours were the waiting transports that were to carry the army that was to cut off Port Arthur. The work of the force which was to fight the first important land engagement of the war was unheralded, while the ports of China filled the press with "shocks" and "counter shocks" of rumours and imaginings. It was a new situation in journalism. But the fact of Kuroki's presence by actual contact, I repeat, must have been known to the Russians a week before the crossing; while the Japanese, on their part, thanks to their intelligence service, knew of the preparations at Antung immediately they were begun. The only Japanese force brought against Antung was naval.

When a council was held we are told that many of the young officers maintained that the Japanese were going to cross up the river. Zassulitch, however, had arranged that the Japanese should land at Antung, and he would not have it any other way. One thing that held him to his opinion was the fact that a launch had been seen landing bridge timbers on one of the lower islands—a candid, open-faced launch! At the same time, pontoon trains and coolie-borne timbers had moved over a rise in plain sight down the river, and, once obscured, had started up the river again. (Aside from that, the Japanese were, indeed, to build a bridge down the

river for purposes which shall appear later.) Immediately they were ready for their effective crossing above Wiju, the gunboats made a most earnest demonstration in the neighbourhood of Antung, while infantry feinted on the lower reaches.

Now the place for reserves was unquestionably at Hamatan, where the road from Antung joins the Peking road. Here they were held ready to reinforce in either direction. But they hurried toward Feng-wang-cheng, without going to the assistance of their comrades in distress, we judge. At all events, they did not come into action, and so may be dismissed.

Scarcely a spadeful of earth had been turned for the sake of the guns on that miserable Peking road from Ku-lien-cheng; and all the approaches up steep ascents to the positions were in nowise creditable to the engineers who had admirably prepared those at Antung. The lack of provision, especially when the action was to be a delaying one, may be accounted for by the guns having to take up unexpected positions. But there is no gainsaying the fact that some of the Russian artillery was at the Yalu a fortnight before the battle, and that simple scouting over the Korean roads could have established the movement of an army corps with all transportation over that main highway which, on the other side of the Yalu, starts from Ku-lien-cheng.

So well did the Japanese fool their enemy that

they struck the Russian where he was unprepared, and never sent a man against him where he was prepared. On the morning of May 30th the Russian position was an angle made by the Ai-ho's junction with the Yalu. From their point of crossing up the Yalu the Japanese had overnight sent a column straight over the hills in line with the course of the Ai-ho, while the Guards, who had crossed here, went up the river bed past Tiger's Hill, and in the morning, with the 2nd Division opposite Ku-lien-cheng, the line thus enveloped the angle. The only guns to remain and make any show of fight were those at Makau up the Ai-ho, which we had been unable to silence during the artillery duel of April 30th, but which were silenced promptly on the 1st.

The "conical-hill battery" fell back overnight. Hamatan, where the Russians were caught the next evening, was less than ten miles away. With the close of the infantry engagement the Russians, who had by no means made full use of their opportunities in a delaying action, had measurably accomplished their object, though with a heavier loss than was called for, because of their trenches, which were in nowise shell-proof. Kuroki had been forced to infinite preparation and a battle formation which had occupied him two weeks.

Two ticklish problems which had bothered the Japanese Chief of Staff were easily solved. The first was that of a pontoon bridge across the one

unfordable channel below Wiju. This was accomplished by floating the pontoons down stream from above Wiju on the night of the 30th, without discovery by the Russians. The other was fording the Ai-ho in order that the flanking portion of the army might reach the heights. The soldiers were fertile in suggestions, which included boards and tubs and other conceptions which did not meet with staff approval. One officer wanted to lead a picked body of skilful swimmers, who would strip naked, and, with rifles held over their heads, swim across with a rope which they would make fast as a help for those who followed. But this was unnecessary, because we had had a week without rain. Scouts found fordable places. The important thing was speed. The quicker a soldier crossed, the less he was exposed. It was in the water that most of our casualties occurred. The pontoons so skilfully floated down stream had afforded both guns and infantry passage. The route by the bridge across the upper islands was out of the question in a juncture where time was everything. Our little Japanese horses cannot gallop much, but they did the best they could; and axle-deep in sand, again in water, a battery crossed over and went up the valley of the Ai, and then, slewing and bouncing, through a path in the hills running at right angles to the line of retreat.

Along the old Peking road moved the two regiments that had defended Ku-lien-cheng. Not only

the two regiments, but their guns, their soup-boilers, their heavy transportation carts—an equipment made for the steppes—winding and plodding over the stony, rutty, crooked, unkept mountain road. The band with all its instruments was along, too. No flankers were on the hills. With 40,000 victorious soldiers in their rear, the Russians moved as one vegetating Siberian garrison would move from an old to a new post.

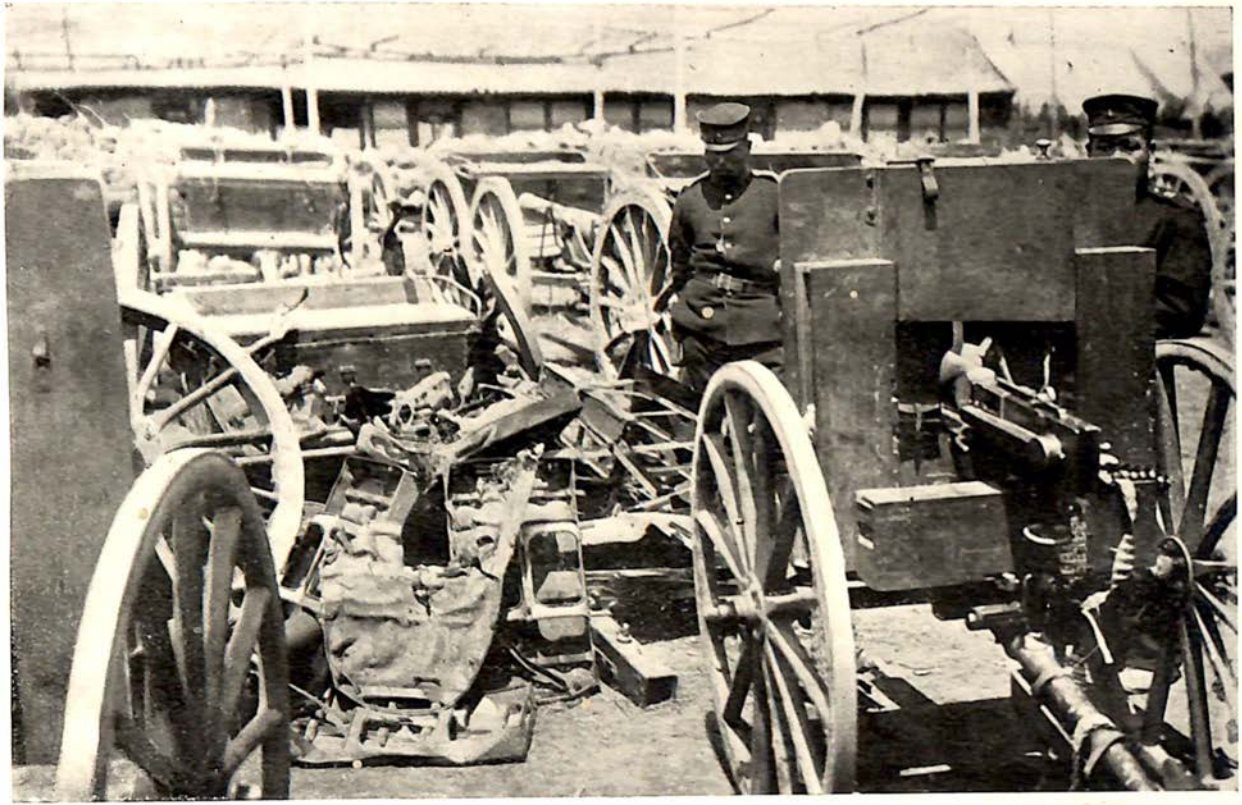
Our fresh reserves went past the tired storming parties. Three columns of them, pressing toward a common objective, climbed over the hills. Some of the men were so tired that they fell asleep the moment they halted. One sure way of keeping them awake, a Japanese officer told me, was to keep them going. The first knowledge the Russians had of the activity of the Japanese pursuit was the sight of a company of the 24th Regiment, which had outmarched all the others, and was so extremely keen and natural and human and unsystematic that it got its fingers badly burned.

When it came over the knoll it beheld a soldier's Promised Land. Here was a road charged with a marching column under its rifles. The Russian guns unlimbered; the Russian infantry deployed and charged. The tables of odds at Ku-lien-cheng were suddenly changed. If that company had done the text-book thing of hurrying back to its support, the Russians would have been much farther along the road and the booty and prisoners might have

been fewer. It had had one superior officer and three lieutenants. All its cartridges were gone and bayonets were fixed, while the Russian line was only two yards away—when bountiful assistance came. The Russians had scarcely felt this fire on its right flank in front when the head of the column on the left flank broke over the hills, and so did that of the right flank in the rear.

From that moment the drama was not war in the valley of the old Peking road. It was slaughter. The Russians formed around their guns and tried to charge. Bullets that missed the infantry caught the artillery horses and the horses of the waggons. Increasing as more men came up, the fire from the hills was steady and remorseless as an electric current along a wire. Out of the *mêlée* a Russian priest led the remains of one regiment, charging through a bullet-swept space. We know only that he did this gallant thing. All Russia must know him as a hero ere this letter is mailed.

The rest had made the sacrifice that a soldier's honour demanded. In their disorganization and inexperience further resistance was futile and murderous. A white handkerchief came out of an officer's pocket as instinctively as a drowning man tries to keep his head above water. The Japanese descended from the hill into the valley, where dead artillery horses and dead men lay piled together. All military sense had disappeared. The masters directing the retreat an hour ago were a part of a pitiful, stricken mob. Russian officers, without



SOME OF THE GUNS CAPTURED AT HAMATAN

thinking of their captors or of anything except that they were breathing and were out of hell, hugged and kissed one another while they wept. A messmate would see a messmate who was still living, and they would rush toward each other to embrace hysterically; then, asking what had become of another friend, perhaps would see him lying dead near by.

"It was strange to us," said a Japanese officer; for one Japanese man never kisses or embraces another. If the Russians had been fighting for many hours and, steadily losing, finally had surrendered, they would have borne themselves, as most soldiers do under such circumstances, with stoical indifference. The effect of the surprise—a surprise by yellow men—was that of an explosion. Standing among the ruins of the wreck, the survivors felt themselves the happy creatures of a dispensation of Providence.

So it is Hamatan which spells "disaster" for the Russians on the Yalu. The impact Japanese divisions, an attack undelivered until all was ready and then delivered rapidly and precisely, meant a strong pursuit, which Russian carelessness abetted. It may be said of Kuroki that his task could not have been better performed. Our own losses were less than 1,000; the Russian trebled ours, including nearly 1,000 prisoners, twenty-one field guns, six Maxims, and a proportionate quantity of ammunition waggons, transport carts, and rifles and—all the band instruments.

When I was ready to cross the river with my

baggage the morning after, I took the pontoon and the bridge by the lower islands, which was now thick with transportation. Ku-lien-cheng was deserted except for the transport men and the wounded Russian officers and prisoners. All were yet dazed—dazed by the effect of the explosion. I noticed that the age of the officers varied. I observed one, a captain of sixty years, with bristling moustache, lean and tall, whose face bespoke the frontier. He knew no foreign language. He was truly Russian. I noticed especially the devotion of the soldiers to their superiors, cooking what there was to cook for them, and trying in their rough way, in this new situation, to make them more comfortable. I talked a little with one of the younger officers, blue-eyed, full-bearded.

"Completely overcome!" he kept repeating. That expressed his whole sense of Hamatan. Then he added, "It is a little hard to be among the first prisoners in the war."

Yet I thought that the fatality of the Oriental—for the Russian is an Oriental—made all the Russians, considering their previous contempt for their little enemies, far more cheerful than Anglo-Saxons would have been under the same conditions.

In Antung itself a courtyard is packed thick with guns—better field-guns than the Japanese have ever owned before—and busy little soldiers of Japan are separating and cataloguing the booty of the giants. The big bass horn had two bullet holes through it,

and the clarionet is quite beyond repair, for the same vital reason. There are live shells enough to supply the battery, which will soon be turned against its former owners, with ammunition for more than one day's work. I noticed that the Cossack swords were dull-edged. Our enemy has yet to wake up to a realization that he is at war with a serious foe. Outside in the street the slender, narrow Japanese carts are passing by. These are meant for mountain roads. The broad, heavy carts that we captured were meant for the steppes. Between the two types there is the contrast of a hansom and a four-wheeler.

In another compound not far away are the men who, three days ago, had manned the guns and guarded the carts; big, bulky fellows in boots and broad-legged trousers and loose tunics. They are having a much better time than they ever expected. When I looked in on them I saw that their hosts had rigged up a horizontal bar. A sturdy little Japanese guard was teaching them exercises. They tried hard and laughed at their failure, and marvelled at the agility of the little fellow, who, with a Japanese grin and Japanese persistence, kept on urging and training them till they were quite tired out. Another guard was a teacher of the Japanese numerals and a pupil who stuttered away at the Russian numerals, in turn. In the hospitals Russian and Japanese wounded are receiving the same attention. The wounded Japanese is the more stoical.

He submits grimly to an operation without anæsthetics, and he marvels a little when a Russian sufferer groans. Some of the Russians who were shot at Hamatan have since died. Among them was a captain who was buried on one of the hills above the town with military honours, and with religious honours in keeping with a war where the East meets the West with modern arms. There were two services, one by a Buddhist priest, and the other by Mr. Vyff, the Danish missionary.

Through the open doors of the hospitals on these pleasant spring days in a temperate clime comes the creak of Chinese and Japanese carts carrying the food of the soldiers ahead. First, Seoul was the Japanese base for the 12th Division that marched to Ping Yang, then Chenampo, then Yongampho. Now it is Antung. The water front where the Russians built their trenches without an armed host is stocked with stores that feed the stream of traffic moving northward. The life of the town itself is unchanged. One day the Russians were here; the next the Japanese. The shops were not closed on account of the change. There is no license on the part of the Japanese; they act the part of guests and customers. Our little soldier pays for the goodies that the cake vendor had ready on his arrival. The Government pays a good price for horses and a good rental for carts. Antung is busier than it has been for years, and sees profit ahead.—*Antung, Manchuria, May 6th.*

CHINESE GARRISON GOING OUT TO MEET GENERAL KUROKI ON HIS ARRIVAL AT FENG-WANG-CHENG

CHAPTER X

THE OWNER OF THE BATTLE-GROUND

WHEN General Kuroki and his staff approached Feng-Wang-Cheng, the Governor and the local officials came out to offer him the freedom of the city, which had been in the grip of his advance for more than a week. The woven-hair windows of the Governor's chair threw a subdued light on silken robes; the swaggering trot of its bearers, scornful of populations, set off the occupant's languid impassiveness, the absence of which in the Caucasian forms the Oriental's chief source of contempt for us.

In all the essential facts of modern conquest the occupation of Feng-Wang-Cheng was complete. There was not even the saving hope (which buoys the spirits of most beaten peoples in their humiliation) of legions in the background which might re-form and recover the lost ground. Submission here had no hint of sullen patience; it was signified by receiving the General as if he were a travelling foreigner of distinction. For the Chinese the art of war is the art of making profit out of defeat. The officer and

the official had skin of the same tint and a common classic language, whose written characters either could understand. Saying that both were Oriental was the same as saying that both Americans and Abyssinians are Christians.

Kuroki had come on horseback. His blue coat was sprinkled with the dust of the army-travelled road; his credentials were the blow his legions could strike. Otherwise than stepping in and out of his chair, the Governor had lifted no finger of effort to bring himself to the meeting; his credentials were the service and the squeeze-money he could command without a gesture. The contrast of the two men was pale beside that of the soldiery at their backs. These incarnated a civilization which is the most exclusively martial of any in the world, and those one which has found a means of unparalleled perpetuity in its contempt for arms.

The discipline of the Chinese soldiers was in harmony with the cut of their baggy trousers. They were recruited from the scum of the population—rapscallions who had a "good job," an easy way of earning a living. The object of their organization was personal protection to the Governor; their number some test of his importance in the world. From road's end to road's end, to right and to left, wherever the advance extended, were the best blood and best physique of another land where, pay not being the main question, it is a great privilege to carry a rifle for your Emperor. Yet they would

have seen in their Governor's manner of dealing with the situation, and in their untidy soldiers, too, a vindication of their race pride. Kuroki's adjuncts of power were not those which the Chinese have held dear for thousands of years. His marching and counter-marching thousands are sheerly ridiculous to the only civilized people which have no respect for the profession of arms.

Never has the Chinese had a broader canvas or a better subject for the art of making profit out of the conqueror. He is in a sense the umpire representing civilized opinion as between the two disputants. With the burning of Moscow in mind, superficial consideration might have led one to expect that the Russian would desolate the land through which he retreated. Policy would not permit. Some houses have been burned, but these seem to represent only individual instances of Cossack outlawry or the spleen of commanding officers who were out of temper on retreat.

Population and granaries at Feng-Wang-Cheng, as at Antung, were left undisturbed. The Russians expect to return. They argue that when they come they will want the corn for food, and the fodder for their horses, and houses in which to billet their soldiers. Any expanding empire must have some conviction that it is easier to rule a people through their indifference and undisturbed economy than by provoking their hatred. The Japanese expect to remain till the Russian cloud has passed. They

have the same material objects of sustenance and comfort in view, and, besides, they must give day by day proof of the singleness of their purpose in coming to rescue this people from outside dominion and guarantee a permanent return of sovereignty. They come as friends of the Chinese, who recognize friendship only through actual benefits gained.

Whether it is the house of the Governor, the storekeeper, or the rooms of a temple priest that you occupy, each has the most distinct Oriental felicity in face of personal discomfort—that art of making profit from defeat; of making you feel at home in a way that commands a present at the end of your stay. You comprehend how the Russians were made equally welcome. Does the Chinese distinguish at all between friend and foe? Does he see in either more than inconvenience in return for a market for his produce? I am inclined to think that he would not object to having the war go on indefinitely without prejudice as a business proposition. His preferences are hidden behind a mask which possibly the Japanese, who can read the ideographs, may penetrate; but surely an Occidental may not. He wants, indeed, to rule no other country and to have no other country rule him. The island Oriental understands him better than the Russian does. If he could fully appreciate that Japanese success means the integrity of China as promised—and that he might go his own hermit way

—thé big Manchurian might have the patriotism to fight on his own account.

But the integrity of China is a generality which includes the people who live across the river, and in the next town. What has one to do with them? Do they earn food for you and your family? The Chinese has, in common with others, manners, customs, physiognomy, and industry. Collectivism he does not understand at all, or rather he understands it in his way. If he succeeds in business, he will take all his relatives into the establishment and care for them. He will go in numbers to the joss-house to beat gongs to appease mythical animals that make droughts and floods. Foreign invasions belong to the same order of disturbances, and he would meet them in the same way.

To-day, then, we have the most martial and the least martial of civilizations side by side exemplifying by personal examples each its dominating quality. One searches history vainly for a parallel. There is the industrialist gleaning parched grain from the ruins of his house, and the patriot who dies for glory alone. It is fair weather for military movements—on the road is the soldier. It is sowing time—in the fields is the Chinese. The man on the road is working slavishly for his country; the man in the field is working slavishly for himself and his family.

The "transporters" better explain the martial

marvel of Japan than the firing line. The "transporters" are always at the rear, and only at the rear—the drudge ants of this army of workers that carry mill and granary with them. They play the same part as our civilian teamsters who receive $3 a day, while our soldiers themselves receive only one-sixth as much. It is a "good job" for the teamster; it is war for the soldier. For the "transporter" it is neither a "good job" nor war.

In the drafting of conscripts in Japan the poorest in physique and general fitness are rejected. Of those accepted, the farthest below the standard, I understand, are made "transporters." Because he is an inch shorter than his fellows, Nippon Denji may smell powder only when the transport waggons are attacked. At landing-places and depôts he must bear sacks of rice and *saké* kegs on his back. On the road, he has to lead by day the ponies that draw the little transportation carts and groom them by night. The ponies go better for leading; if they did not, economy of energy would demand that the "transporter" walks just the same. For those geniuses of quick marches and swift decisive blows —the fighting men—the time required for perfecting strategic plans or bringing up other columns may mean weeks of rest. Not infrequently they must wait for the supply trains, which means all the more haste for carts and ponies.

The "transporter's" work is like that of the excavation of a great mine. There is always more to

do. Day in and day out they pass back and forth over the dusty road, no sooner depositing one load than returning for another. Their pay for a month would not buy a day's square meals in New York or Chicago. Yet they smile as they work. Their hearts are in their drudgery. Their smile, their spirit, their eagerness—these are the marvels to the Occidental. They are not forced to toil by a military aristocracy. It is a privilege to serve the Emperor in the field even as a "transporter." A line of braid on the cuff—the soldier has one; the "transporter" has none—is the bridge between chivalry and labour. When one of our Western regiments would tower over any Japanese regiment like so many elder brothers, the added inch which takes the conscript from the supply train to the firing line has a suggestion of irony to the Occidental.

So it well might to the native. For the Manchu is as big as the Russian. No human exhibition could be more unreasonable to him than that of the "transporters" who do coolies' labour for a pittance. But the Chinese, too, is a creature of sentiment and of self-sacrifice. He works for his family and his ancestral tablets. On the other hand, the "transporter's" family sent him forth, proud that he might endure hardship for a few cents a day.

Japan, the chivalrous, is poor; China, the mercantile, is rich. If the Chinese should turn their energy toward war— Yes, if—if all the people of New York should decide to move into the country

to-morrow! Speculation is easy. The Chinese have assimilated many armies, many "transporters." They now rule their old conquerors, the Manchus. They have worked out the only practice—making profit of defeat—that has preserved a people intact while new Empires were born and old ones fell. They started before the Greeks, and the Peking car still goes creaking along their bad roads. Whatever the outcome of the war, they will miss no good bargains, will waste no time in idleness, and will always be fond of their little children, and fonder of their grandmothers, and yet fonder of the graves of their great-great-grandmothers.—*Feng-Wang-Cheng, Manchuria, May 18th.*

CHAPTER XI

A TRIBUTE TO THE DEAD

JAPAN has two religions. One is all soul; the other is the worship of patriotism. One has carried the breath of peace through the breadth of Asia; the other is the outgrowth of a single country's primitive superstitions, without ethical code or strictly ethical grandeur.

The memorial service for the dead of the 2nd Division yesterday was a revelation of the heart of this peculiar, this martial race. The hurrying tourist, seeing many Buddhist temples with their many images (visited by old men and women and children) and skipping the simple Shinto temples, reaches hasty conclusions of a national cult that is little more than the memories of a people's folk-lore. War passes the philosopher by, and sinks the plummet deep into the human emotions. Here, while a Shinto priest performed the rites of his faith, an Imperial Prince, a General of Division, and a score or more of staff officers and 8,000 troops were motionless, reverential spectators. When the Buddhist priest took his place, the

officers scattered and the soldiers were marched away.

Both the situation and the weather were fit for the ceremony held in a fair land that military ardour had conquered. It was at nine in the morning, when you prefer to leave the shade for the open. The sun shone brightly. There was a hillside for the sanctuary; the plain for the congregation in khaki. Beyond them was the town, with its walled citadel, pagoda-roofed, set in the levels of growing corn and millet, and in the distance the precipitous saw-tooth, splintered-rock summits of Feng-Wang Mountain, the highest point of the natural wall of defences of this waiting army.

On the field of Stakelberg's abortive attempt to relieve Port Arthur, dispatches tell us that the Japanese Second Army men are still picking up the Russian dead and assorting the trophies of another hard-fought battle. Whatever struggles were passing at Port Arthur, where besieged strain with watching and besiegers with preparation, at Feng-Wang-Cheng the peace was as profound as in the temples of Nikko. The stalwart soldiers in rigid lines spoke of the North, of the vigour which comes with existence in an inhospitable climate; but the sanctuary carried you back to the toyland where the soldiers came from. The ceremony was in keeping with a late spring morning. It was as suited to summer as the church interior to winter. Thinking of the snows to come, of fields that are

wide, instead of diminutive, of a land whose physical aspect recalls the Caucasian, it seemed as much out of place as cathedrals in the tropics. Shintoism no less than Buddhism is at home in a land where corn instead of rice is grown.

Two lines of different-coloured streamers on tall staffs ran to the improvised *torii* with its fluttering zigzag *gohei* (strips of white paper denoting purity) and the crossed flags of Japan. Cut evergreen trees inclosed the oblong space on which the thoughts of the thousands were centred. Poets say that the evergreen denotes everlasting purity. Shintoism says nothing; it is a faith that has forms which seem to have outlived their traditions—at least for the foreigner's ears. The masses take pines in the yard of a Shinto temple for granted, as we take them for Christmastide. In place of the *inari* (foxes) were trees that blossomed with paper flowers such as any smart house-boy could make on short notice. The *inari* are the messengers from God; for the fox is a clever strategist, and therefore fit to guard a Japanese temple. The blossoms were peonies; the flower of Buddhism is the lotus. Barring these externals, the unreverential might have thought himself invited to a view of the provisions before a regimental feast. Young onions, the coarse radishes and coarse lettuce of the country, and small Japanese cakes were piled high on a number of stands, and on one four well-tied and decorous fowls were blinking. These were the

regimental offerings to dead comrades. To those who fell on May 1st, when the gardens were only just being planted and the canteen men had not yet brought up beer, they would have been delicacies indeed. After the ceremony, they were to be divided among the living.

On one side of the sanctuary was the General and the Staff of the 2nd Division, some officers from the corps staff, and the foreign attachés. The picturesque figure was Nishi himself, who had just been made a full General in recognition of his services at the battle of the Yalu. Even in his khaki, which yet became him well, he looked like a feudal lord out of an old print. Lean of figure, with skin of yellowed parchment drawn over his high cheekbones, you felt that he might smile—a Japanese smile—but otherwise his expression, waking or sleeping, never changed. On his right was Prince Kuni, of the Imperial blood, wearing also the cords of the staff, a roly-poly little man, standing more at his ease than his colleagues. On the other side, forming an avenue up the slope through which the soldiery on the plain could see the function, were unattached soldiers and officers.

The brocade-robed, white-bearded priest wore the sword of a samurai—of a Shintoism militant. His assistants were two soldiers who had been priests before the war began. He himself was, in fact, the only Shinto priest with the 2nd Division. In the fight at Hamatan, on May 1st, where bayonets

were fixed and there were charges and counter-charges, and finally a Russian priest led the remnant of a regiment out of a *cul-de-sac* under a murderous fire, there was no Japanese priest in attendance. The Japanese army has no chaplains. The priests who are here come by courtesy, and have no official position in a force where economy would not permit the presence of a single man who did not assist toward the great material result of efficiency.

Every Japanese soldier is in a sense his own priest. If all national boundaries in Europe were erased, and the whole took the cross as a flag in the name of common deliverance, you would have a parallel of the different Japanese provinces suddenly united by the reformation under the common banner of race and faith. The red centre of the Japanese emblem stands for the birth of the Imperial ancestor from the loins of the Sun Goddess. The Emperor, then, is the deity of this cult of folklore; faith and patriotism and militant racial impulse are united in one. God is country and country is God in the person of the Emperor.

When the priest came forward and waved his wand of white paper streamers over the prince and the staff, and over the multitude in khaki, it is safe to say that not one of the officers standing there really believed in this exorcism of the evil spirit any more than the average European General Staff believes that Jonah swallowed the whale. They did

believe in the rising sun on the flag, in the Emperor, in their country. According to their creed, the Emperor had given them life and position and whatsoever they held dear in this world, and it was their duty to return gallantly, unhesitatingly, that which he had given whenever the call should come. If logic made them doubt his divinity, their hearts felt the illusion completely.

From the little inclosure at one side, made of sections of soldiers' tents, the assistant priests brought other offerings—of *saké* (the Japanese wine), of sweets—which the priest held up before the officers and the army and blessed, and then deposited on the stand left vacant for the purpose. When the stand was overflowing the priests fell back, and General Nishi, unbending, his face a Japanese mask of parchment, advanced and unrolled a thick sheet of paper as big as a pillow-case (of the same sort as that from which I saw the Emperor read his address opening the Diet). If the sheet was large, the characters were large also and the words few. In that same voice of quiet monotone, he read his speech commemorating the dead.

It was a good speech; almost a great speech, even disregarding the eloquence of the situation, for a soldier to make. As between it and the speech of the average Russian general on a similar occasion, good taste was all on the side of the Japanese. In spite of the fact that Shintoism conceives no definite immortality, he addressed the

fallen as if they were actually present. He would not have been a Japanese if he had not politely apologized for the meagreness of the offerings.

Without definitely saying so, he nevertheless spoke the thought of how for the first time the Japanese army had met European foes, and, for the first time on trial before the world, had overcome a valiant enemy in a position strong by nature and strengthened by art. Now this army's courage was "whittled to the very edge," he said. He bade the "sweet souls" of the fallen to rest in peace, conscious that they should never be forgotten; they had served the faith. Fame! The hope of being ever remembered by their friends and their family as having died for Japan—that is the immortality which calls the Japanese in place of the houris of the Mohammedan. Fame and the faith (which is country)!—there again you have the explanation of the military marvel of the Orient.

When he had finished, first the Prince and then the General, followed by all the officers and the foreign military attachés, brought sprigs of evergreens (purity) tied by ribbons of white paper (purity) and deposited them in rapt silence on another stand that had been set in front of the one which held the offerings that had been specially blessed. Then the troop of buglers, who stood at the centre of the troops, blew a fanfare. In thirds and fifths, it was discordant to the ears of the Occidental. But to the Japanese it was musical

and inspiring, perhaps. Then the three regiments of infantry, the regiment of artillery (without their guns), the regiment of cavalry, and the engineers moved as one body. They have changed their blue uniforms to khaki, but the colour of their blankets and their accoutrements remains the same. Pacing the hill in close order, they looked like raised sections of dry brown earth. Turning, their blanket rolls showed. One moment it was like the dull underside, the next like the upperside, of a variegated carpet.

A Buddhist priest came in front of the sanctuary and set down a burner smoking with incense. Here was the suggestion of a great soul religion like Catholicism. A few, in easy attitudes, watched him through the elaborate, meaning service, while the soldiers went streaming back to their quarters along the roads. The heart religion of sceptical, materialistic, subtle, martial Japan is the folklore of her fathers. Buddhism is the dilettante faith of individual devotees. But the faith of youth and war is Emperor and country. Shintoism is inherent, official. The Emperor is a Shintoist. Beside the ceremony that had preceded it, the Buddhist service was like a prayer in the ante-room after formal prayer in official session.—*Feng-Wang-Cheng, Manchuria, June 15th.*

CHAPTER XII

THREE DIVISIONS ON THREE ROADS

CONVERGING columns must wait each upon the progress of the others to the tune of the master's plans. General Nishi said last night that we should wait here during to-day. The 2nd Division follows the Peking road through the Motien Pass, which is the Thermopylæ between Feng-Wang-Cheng and Liaoyang. The 12th follows parallel waggon-paths to the north, and the Imperial Guards parallel waggon-paths to the south. Beyond this, the whole of Kuroki's army, are other Japanese armies stretching to the railroad itself and barring the sea from the Russians with practically an intact line of bayonets. Drawn toward the centre, the forces of either side which have fought in isolated battles will be united.

For six weeks we waited at Feng-Wang-Cheng, counting the days till the beginning of the rainy season, from which all time in the East is reckoned. The Chinese calendar sets the date as July 10th. The last weeks of June were at hand. We began to ask if we were not going to Liaoyang after all. In

the stagnation of an army in the field in camp, which the contrast of the nervous excitement of an army in movement makes the more deadening, the correspondent waited, knowing only that, once the downpour began, movement was possible only to an army of Herculean energy. The flash of information that was our deliverance came like the flash of lightning out of a blue sky, as it always does from the armour-clad secrecy of military staffs.

With it came all details, too, as usual. The precise hour was named when the division headquarters would pass the grove where I had become as settled in my tent as in a manor house. It is dawn at four, and soon after we heard the tread of infantry and the clank of their accoutrements. At eight on the morning of the 24th, to be exact—just at eight to the minute announced—General Nishi, riding as the point of the wedge with his staff behind him, made an interval of isolation in a division's passing.

Behind the staff were some strange-looking men, indeed, such as Marco Polo never described in his travels. They rode big geldings, suitably provided by the Government, and they were big themselves, and, though clad in different habits, they seemed to the army itself to have been poured out of the same mould. Only the keenest slant-eyed observers could have seen that they might speak different languages and come from different lands. Their distinction from the thousands of soldiery and the Chinese (who were hoeing the corn which they were just

planting when we came to Feng-Wang-Cheng) quite sank any distinction of one from another.

They had straight eyes and white faces, and their eyes were not black. The military attachés and the correspondents are the albinos of the army. More than one private who saw them pass wondered what they were doing riding with the General. Let them appear on the line of outposts and they would be taken for Russians. Only yesterday an English-speaking Japanese said to me that he could not tell one European from another; that he had heard that either nationality could tell an Englishman from an American almost at a glance, and he asked me if it were true. Therein lies an excuse for, if not an explanation of, why neither correspondents nor military attachés are allowed more freedom of movement. To bring the comparison home, if the average American officer, let alone outpost, could not distinguish a Japanese from a Chinese or a Korean with hair cut the same way and wearing much the same kind of clothes, he would take no risks on the strength of his judgment. So the attachés ride behind the staff, and the correspondents behind the attachés, and they are the most curious thing about this army to the army itself.

Two or three miles out of Feng-Wang-Cheng, on the bank of the river, a guard of cavalry was drawn up. This, the General's escort, completed the formation of the headquarter's party, whose pace was that of the infantry. All the first morning we were

within the zone of Japanese occupation, during our rest in camp. The period of waiting had had no idle moments for the engineers, who went to their work every day with the regularity of mortar carriers.

The heights beyond the town were seamed with trenches and cut with roads for the artillery. Not one had been required in action. It was not thought that they ever would be. Their value was "moral." They made 50,000 men as good as 100,000 men for defence, and they held safe on Kuropatkin's flank an army which could be thrown into his rear the moment that he should advance with his whole force to the relief of Port Arthur. He advanced with part, with a result that we all know.

When we had gone over the highest of the hills which hold Feng-Wang-Cheng in their lap, we left the made roads and came again to the old Peking road. Our course wound with the valley made by the stream, which we were always fording. And as the course wound, so wound the column and their transport. On either hand were mountains, ever mountains, pyramidal, sugar-loafed, terraced, thick with trees, untouched by art except where the Chinese had carried their tillage patches from the fertile valley up the slopes. An army with guns would be almost as helpless off that road as a fish out of water. The one sign of human presence we saw on the heights was a spot where the trees had been levelled and a signal-staff told of a Russian lookout.

In front of the General was the advance guard, and behind, as ahead, the road was as thick with soldiers as the hills with trees. In that streak of humanity, with its canopy of dust, the only persons that rode alone were the General himself and an officer astride a kicking horse. Until you see them in column, you do not realize what a big force they are, and until you see their transport you do not realize what a lot they eat; and until you have ridden all day at the rate of arduously marching men you do not realize what the pleasure of riding at will is.

No stream ever followed its course more closely than we this old highway. There was only one channel for the current of khaki shoulders. In the fields always were the scattered blue-bloused Chinese workmen. Elderly women—I saw no young ones—were weeding their gardens in the groups of houses dignified with a name on the map where the farming folk live. (Those who think of all China as overcrowded must overlook this part of Manchuria, which is sparsely settled.) The local population had seen the Russians go away a few hours before; they may have had to take cover while there was an exchange of shots. If so, there was time wasted, and they must work that much harder to make up for it. They did not take the trouble to look up at the thousands of madmen who, according to their thinking, were chasing thousands of other madmen playing at a madman's game. The General was

only a mounted man to them. A runner on a bicycle interested them far more.

The earnestness with which everything in the column's progress was done alone bespoke the fact that we were not on a route march. Always we were hearing of the Russians just ahead. The first sign we had of their existence was on the second day, when we saw on a knoll half-a-dozen big, blond-haired men in grey caps. These were a "point" that had been betrayed into the arms of Japanese scouts by a false Chinese guide, I was told. They had every right to be bored, every Japanese surgeon who passed stopping to offer them some attention. We passed one other wounded Russian in one of the springless bolting Chinese carts. He had been shot in his head, which he rested on a pile of sacks under the broiling sun. He looked up at our Caucasian faces quizzically, as if wondering how we could be going in the opposite direction when we had been captured too.

But I set out to write of a march, not of bloodshed (of which there was none of account) a march that went like clockwork. Five-sixths of the thought of staffs is centred upon getting a soldier rapidly along a highway, with sufficient food and ammunition. The weight of his pack, how it should be adjusted, how to keep up his spirits in the face of fatigue, the minimum bulk of food which will give him nourishment—these were the subjects of military councils long before the time of Cæsar.

The soldier of every country has his peculiar prejudices and his peculiar habits. The Japanese soldier carries only 40 lbs., as against 60 lbs. for the soldiers of other countries. Yet in height the 2nd Division, drawn from the north, where the climate is severe and the human product that survives is sturdy, would compare favourably with the height of many Continental and even many English regiments, while in actual carrying capacity they are probably the superior. Besides, height is not everything. The Japanese soldier is never weedy. He is built on the square; he is a buttress instead of a pole.

His only prejudice is in favour of teapots. These he gathers by the way; he is loath also to give up a certain type of enamelled cup purchasable in Feng-Wang-Cheng. He not only carries his 40 lbs. to the end of the march, but the end of the march finds him in line. Out of the whole division I did not see 100 stragglers on any day.

We did not make more than half the distance in a day of some of the famous route marches of famous Continental armies, it is true; but the Continental conscript has a macadamized road, while such a sun as that which makes the corn grow in a Manchurian valley is unknown. This army is not doing a few days' show practice. It marched over the icy roads of Korea in February, and has been under marching conditions ever since, and keeping its health. In all weathers it must go on, with its

nerve steady at any moment for the shock of battle, not for the blank volleys of a manœuvre. This Oriental army refuses to attempt the impossible. It does not depend upon "chance" or upon "dashes." It can keep to a programme because it knows all limitations, and they leave nothing to sporadic efforts. Every column and every officer is a part of the quiet whole. All is team play, nothing is for any gallery, unless it is the international gallery. A common efficiency permits the head to know precisely what each part can do under certain conditions. With this is coupled the absolute certainty that no Japanese line will retreat while it has a third of its men standing. As no corps, no division, no regiment stands out with the conspicuousness common in other lands, so does no general. The private is a private; the officer an officer, impersonal.

The common enemy of the three days has been the Manchurian sun; the shots of the parties of observation no more than flea-bites. To beat the sun you must rise early. On the second morning, when we moved out of Siuehlitien, having slept in the open with the heavy dew on our faces, the hour set was 5.50.

"Why not six?" an Anglo-Saxon asked. "This is cutting it as fine as the four-dollar-ninety-nine cent bargain at a department store."

There was no affectation about this precision. It was a part of the system. At 5.50 in the fields

beyond the town, with the air still thick with dew, and the mountains shrouded in mist, we found the regiments and the guns, with every last part of the equipment of thousands of men, complete and ready as those of an intricate machine.

The foreigners presented themselves to the General—the General neat and polite—who responded with the Japanese smile, and then we mounted and fell in behind him and the appointed regiment. In an hour the town was as clean of the army as if it had never been there, except for the armed guard of the transporters' corps.

As we moved over the winding road through the mountains, I saw the one thing of the three days which did not seem a part of the programme. In some other armies, in a march through the enemy's country, it would have been one of many little "breaks" regarded as inevitable, here it was as prominent as missing his lines by an old actor in a familiar part.

Some of the "transporters" had taken their carts forward into the line of the infantry's march. One of the carts was overturned. I wondered if the infantrymen, with a "What the devil are you doing up here?" had not done the trick in a moment of exasperation. If they had, the transporters would only have smiled in answer to the question. They were smiling, anyway. If the whole army were routed, what remained would smile. But the smile would not be that of carelessness,

for all the "broken bits" would be studiously gathered in.

These mornings in the mountains always make you think that you are to have an overcast day. Until the sun breaks through, quickly dispelling all vapours and illusions—then is the day's glorious interval for marching. Toward noon, when we stop for an hour, the marches are shorter, the rests longer. Nippon Denji, the man of Japan, has then eaten all the rice cooked in the company boilers, and the rations of meat and fish supplied him the night before, and with "Break ranks" he rushes to the water, where he washes his pannikin and the little piece of toweling which he always carries, and then wipes the dust from his face and neck. At other times he stacks his rifle and drops his kit and runs to shade, flopping himself down on the cool ground like a seal into water. The joy of this march thus far is that there is always shade and always water. The So River, which we crossed and recrossed, is always fordable, and is fed by mountain springs.

Our twelve miles a day has been made, too, with all baggage keeping pace, and with the advance sending the enemy before it, and always prepared—this solid line of men on the road with hospital corps and ammunition ponies bringing up the rear—to attack in force should the enemy make a stand. It was eleven when we came into Kansautientsz yesterday, under a sun that was like the open lid of a furnace. A regiment of infantry, that had passed

A NOONDAY REST ON THE MARCH

many great fields of young beans without thought of wasting the energy to set foot on them, settled down in a field now, illustrating to the owner how thoroughly in most cases chance entirely rules the fortunes of war. In half an hour this field was trodden down as hard as a tennis court.

The General himself did not know whether or not we were going to move any further that day, but the men must be in organization and ready, heat or no heat. A soldier is not a veteran until he learns to make the most of any conditions. So the infantrymen brought branches from the trees, making the field look like a young grove. When the artillery came up, the gunners did the same, but kept their horses hitched. At four came the word, from the authority which was looking toward the progress of all columns, that we should be here for two days. The groves fell, and the infantrymen marched to the right and left to encamp in ravines. Then the whole army, including correspondents, settled down for the afternoon to wait for the transportation to come up.

The transportation is always behind the guns—the precious guns—force going before the provender when there is an enemy in sight. Thus the advance may arrive at noon and get its dinner at seven. If there is a fight, no one will be thinking of food, and seven will be ample time. With no fight, what is there for a correspondent to do on an empty stomach but lie in the shade and think of the simmer in the

pan of the bacon which first went to Chicago from Nebraska, and then all the way to Manchuria in a yellow sack, which you may pack on pony or cart through the dust, with never a germ disturbing the fatty—oh, too fatty—inside.

To-day the army is washing, the surface of the river is oily with soap worshipfully and vigorously applied. The bushes are hung with garments yesterday steeped in the sweat of conquest. The privileged few who can "rustle" native cauldrons will get hot baths—that supreme luxury which every Japanese has daily at home—which means to him what jam does to an Englishman, sauerkraut to a German, and pie to an American when struggling over roads in pursuit of armed men in a strange land.

To-morrow Nippon Denji will stroll about camp as fresh as a daisy. He will look in at my tent door, and watch the strange being with blond hair and big nose who is writing about his exploits. He is bearable even in his curiosity because he is quite the cleanest soldier in the world.—*Kansuiten, Manchuria, June 27th.*

P.S.—June 28th.—Nippon Denji did little strolling to-day, for it came on to rain as hard as the sun shone yesterday. The dry bed of the So became a channel for a torrent, and the soil of the valley seemed to spurt water like a sponge from the pressure of your foot. But the army is doing its work in waterproofs just the same as if the day were fair. Bad weather cannot spoil the flavour of

the news which concerns Nippon Denji personally and all the world internationally. The Russians have evacuated Motienling. Now, Motienling, as I have already noted, is the pass of Thermopylæ on the road to Liaoyang. Here the Russians had built extensive storehouses, placed mines and barbed wire entanglements, and made ready in all respects for determined defence.

CHAPTER XIII

FIRST ATTACK ON MOTIEN PASS

LIENSHANKWAN is the first collection of houses this side of the watershed which separates the valley of the Yalu from the valley of Liao. Swarms of flies hover over the mire, which steams when the sun shines and turns liquid when it rains. Belated ditching cannot at once offset the evil heritage of Cossack horses quartered in yards and courts.

In the four days that our headquarters has been here we have heard a few spurts of rifle-fire, while the occasional prisoner and occasional wounded man brought in have indicated simply that the enemy has been keeping in touch with our column. With an army of consequence these are as much commonplaces as outpost duty itself, and little skirmishes become what "warming-up practice" is to an out-door game.

At the breaking of light on The Fourth the long report of volleys came over the hills. When they had continued for half an hour the call became irresistible. So saddles were thrown on to our

horses while we breakfasted. It was a little early to ask the staff for the chaperon, who signifies when and where we may move. We proposed to ride forward, dependent upon the courtesy of the officers in the field. Finally we found that we had not counted unwisely on our host.

It was our good fortune and our novel experience as correspondents with this column to come upon the scene of action when it was fresh. What I saw —so creditable was it to Japanese courage and acumen and Japanese humanity—made me wonder more than ever why correspondents have been denied the privileges of the actual front. There are many games in the strife of individuals and nations, but none was ever more intense than that played near the old and the new temples of Kwantei this morning.

The pass itself which the Russians attempted to take is seven miles from the town. We had looked forward to Motienling for a great battle. In Tokyo we heard, again on the march we heard, that the Russians would here make their most determined defence. Japanese strategy forced evacuation without a shot.

The old road leading to the summit is macadamized in nature's way with the rocks and stones which the freshets have not carried away. You climb upward to an opening some fifty feet deep, and here is the Thermopylæ of Manchuria—nothing more or less than a cut in a fan-shaped series of

hills, more defensible from the Yalu side than the Liao side. On the banks two companies of infantry that had marched fast on sudden call were resting. The sound of volleys could still be heard. It had travelled with us—proof enough that the reinforcements were not needed.

All we could see was the verdure-clad mountains on every hand, and the sappers at work on the road that wound around the base of a spur in front of us. This we followed. It led us down into a valley and around the base of another spur and to an open place occupied by a big temple of grey bricks. This was built by the Chinese, because the gods of another temple, it was thought, had prevented the Japanese from taking the road over the pass. Thus deity got its reward, while generals who failed might save themselves from decapitation by suicide.

Now the Red Cross flag was tied to the portals, and on the massive granite steps General Okasawa, commanding the troops that had been engaged, was receiving and despatching messages, while the field telegraph wire (run in from the road), with its streamers of paper warning horseback riders, passed over his head to the operator in the court. At the side entrance a litter was being borne in. Within the sanctuary, the feet of one of the giant blue-and-white-robed gods with hideous face furnished a head-rest for a dying soldier.

In the living apartments of the priest and in the

court, the wounded had great Russian overcoats thrown over them, and you knew by the size of the man, or by the heavy Russian boots which protruded underneath, whether the stricken one was of the enemy or not. All belligerency was out of the minds of those who had lunged and thrust and fenced in darkness with bayonets an hour before. They were now in the one family of the helpless. The orders of the general on the steps, standing for the voice of health and strength, were as quiet as the movements of the surgeon, who knew no side and no country in his work. The Chinese priest who looked blankly on had the proof (in his logic) of the inferiority to his own of the Russian deity, which had failed where his had succeeded.

We rode on to the original temple of the highly successful god, where you felt as near the scene of action as you do when hastening to a fire and you come to a side street blocked with fire-engines and hose. On the steps were two Russian prisoners with their guard. They looked like men who had waked in the morning surprised to find themselves alive. After passing through hell, they were in the quiet of a mountain temple yard surrounded by tokens of their enemy's success. The line had gone on, leaving safety for the stricken.

Beyond the temple the road cuts through the grove. Out of its shadow, as I turned my horse in this direction, came a dead Japanese brought on four crossed sticks. He was still holding his rifle

fast; his limbs were in the position they must have held when instant death came; one hand was at the trigger, the other on the rifle stock; one leg was bent in the act of taking another step toward the foe. A hundred yards farther on the road breaks into open ground. This sweeps down in an apron to a long valley which ends in mountain terraces. With a road and a creek bed at the bottom, the valley is cut like a trough between two rows of high green hills. Where the ascent to another pass begins gleam the white sides of a pagoda. At this place, on the previous day, the Russians had had their advance outpost. On the Japanese side, to the right of the road, at the base of the first hill on the north, the Japanese had had their advance outpost of thirty-six men in a Chinese farmhouse.

Thus far, then, the sensitive finger-point of the First Army—an army which had come all the way from Seoul without a defeat—had felt its way for the protection and the information of the main body behind it. Both sides had their pickets, of course, and the zone between them was combed by the indefatigable Japanese scouts. Behind the big hill to the north of the outpost was a Japanese company in support; at the old temple in the grove was the company of which the outpost was a section. At the new temple were two companies in reserve covering effectively other roads besides that through the valley.

On the night of the 3rd a battalion of the 24th Regiment of Siberian Sharpshooters and a battalion of the 10th Regiment of Siberian Sharpshooters (making 2,000 in all) were formed under shelter of the hills at the far end of the valley. These men were principally Siberian reservists. Of this type of former soldiers and migrants I once heard a Russian general say,—

"There, sir, we have a force to defend Siberia—in these hardy settlers, living an outdoor life, knowing how to fight in a wild country. They have been in the army. They can ride and shoot. Our giants would make short work of the little fellows from Japan. But Japan will not be so foolish—never!"

While he was indulging in such top-loftiness over vodka and cigarettes, the little fellows who fought this morning were smiling, smiling, smiling, and drilling, drilling, drilling, and their officers studying, studying, studying.

One of the captured non-commissioned Russian officers said that they thought the pass was lightly held, and they hoped to surprise its occupants. The surprise was of the nature that the elephant gives the man who puts an express bullet into its brain. It was conceived on information as inadequate as the elephant had.

At shortly after three the front of the Russian column bayoneted the Japanese picket, who had at first, in the darkness, mistaken its advance for one

of the Japanese patrols which were continually coming and going. This was at the ravine behind the big hill, which is transverse with the road. Here the battalion of the Twenty-fourth went in reserve behind the big hill. With them were their lumbering boilers on wheels, so that the men could have hot soup when they reoccupied Motienling. The battalion of the Tenth, without scouts or flankers, proceeded in column along the narrow valley road. Skobeleff used to do this sort of thing against the Turks, who had no outposts and only mass dispositions. It is sometimes successful against an inefficient enemy or a wild tribe that is being forced out of the path of a mushy empire's advance.

The lieutenant in charge of the thirty-six men in the farmhouse had heard the belated challenge of his picket, and stuck his head out of the window, to see the Russian column. His men sprang out with their rifles and ammunition and the clothes they were sleeping in. They fastened themselves on the head of the column with the clear-eyed fury of a mongoose. They had no idea of the numbers of the enemy. They saw forms and knew they were Russians. It did not occur to them to run, let alone surrender.

It was not worth while to shoot. Their natural instinct is to "close in" like torpedo-boats. They used their bayonets. They held on, like a small tackler holding on to the giant who is struggling on with the ball. Their gallantry turned their own

surprise into a surprise for the Russians. They forced the Russians to deploy; they unnerved that long column marching peacefully—especially the men in the darkness to the rear. Indeed, they paved the way for the eventual Russian demoralization. In extricating his men from the *mêlée*, the lieutenant had to act as one of Cæsar's might in re-forming a section of a legion which was broken and fighting desperately; the hand-to-hand conditions were the same, and all that was of use on the modern long-range rifle was the piece of cold steel at its barrel's end.

But he succeeded in leading those who were not killed or wounded to the crest of the apron-like slope from the red temple grove's edge. There they actually formed a line. Many of the twenty survivors were cut and slashed, but all were game. While the thousand Russians deployed in a kind of swarming irregularity over rough ground, the twenty waited for them on the one hand, and for support to come up on the other.

Enough shots had been fired to warn the company behind the hill near the outpost and the company in the grove by the old temple. They assembled and charged toward the sound of the firing. Beyond the grove facing the valley, and on the opposite side of the road, the Japanese had made some trenches. The Russians were already across these when the first company emerged from the grove. The Japanese fired and then clinched. It was still

so dark that the form of a man could be made out only a few feet away. The Russians came up straggling, but with the power of ten to one. The Japanese were in perfect company order. For half an hour they held their ground with cold steel alone, the officers using their swords—that of Lieutenant Kono was nicked like a saw afterward. The momentum of numbers alone should have borne them back. But there was no light, and the Russian soldier is stupid. When the head of the column stopped, the rear stopped also. This they did as instinctively as the Japanese outpost took the offensive—and there you have the beginning of the explanation of the modern wonder of the East. All the four Japanese companies engaged belonged to the first battalion of the regiment—the first being at the old temple, the third behind the big hill, and the second and fourth at the new temple in reserve. The third, being further away than the first, came up a little later and formed on the slope of the big hill to the right of the first. The twenty of the outpost were still standing their ground. The lieutenant saw he was in the way of his own company's fire. Such was his control over his men after their ordeal that he led them to the rear and formed them in a flanking position on the left of his own company, which, soon after daylight, had gained the trench on the other side of the road.

And now the second company came up to the assistance of the other two. With some of the

thousand Russians still hanging on the slope, the mass was still at its foot. They had taken no opportunity of ground except to find cover. The battalion of the Twenty-fourth — with its soup-kettles, remember—was still doing nothing in the ravine behind the big hill. When the battalion of the Tenth fell back under the flanking and plunging fire, they could have re-formed with the Twenty-fourth and had 2,000 men against 500. Instead, this surprise party, which was going to eat its lunch in Motienling, piled on down the valley, and at six o'clock the Japanese were pursuing. By this time the Japanese Major Takakusagi knew all about the Russians, their numbers and position, even if the Russians did not know about him. The Russian battalion of the Twenty-fourth, which was in reserve, could come around the hill and on to the flank of the little Japanese force. One company was kept behind to guard against this possibility.

This it did by getting above the battalion and dropping bullets into the party of the soup-waggons. So the Twenty-fourth—and its soup-waggons—retreated too, and the lot were chased by one-fourth of their numbers right away to the white pagoda.

When you went over the field and saw the disposition which the Japanese had made of their advance force, it was perfect. That is much, and yet there is something that counts more—perfection

in mobility. Far away is that cry that the Japanese were merely copyists. This is a terrain far different to that of their own land. They have evolved a system of their own for it. Considering that the Russians are Russians, they were wise not to go on. If they had, the prisoners and booty they would have lost would have been accordingly large.

To the limit the Japanese knows his enemy; to the limit he knows his ground; he knows that he can depend upon any force of Japanese, however small, not to lose its nerve; and, finally, his troops have the *verve* and the mobility to make his dispositions effective. We smile now when we think of our fears about the Japanese cavalry; better than cavalry is it to have the Russians blunder along the valleys and catch them from the hills. But the Japanese himself is never caught in the valley. When the division advanced up from Feng-Wang-Cheng the main body always stopped behind one of the transverse sections of hills, while the advance guard cleared the way.

All the above is from descriptions on the spot from the Japanese officers and from prisoners. When I arrived, shortly after nine, firing could still be heard from the end of the valley near the white pagoda, and as you came out of the grove of the old temple into the open, the near scene—tragically witnessing defeat, gloriously witnessing a marvellous little victory—did not permit you even

to look the length of the green-walled valley. Here was the aftermath of action still reeking. The two companies that had first met the attack had broken ranks. The rifles were stacked by the roadside. The field was theirs; their duty, to carry in the wounded and bury the dead. Parties armed with spades were already departing for their grim work. On the road itself still lay several of the Russian dead and wounded, these being distinguishable instantly by their size, their dark uniforms, and their big caps. The dead lay as they had expired.

Apart were three more wounded, with an unhurt Russian Red Cross man among them. He was seated in the dust, his arms resting on his knees. He followed the foreigners blankly by rolling his eyes, not by turning his head. The light had broken to find him among these strange, slant-eyed little men, who have already excited Russian superstition to the point of believing that the Japanese are veritable demons for cunning and shooting. It is hard to keep up confidence in your god when you are always being beaten. When the light came he was alone with his wounded, and the Japanese, observing the red cross on his arm, did not march him away with the other prisoners, but properly left him to look after his own. This was now beyond him. He did not seem to realize that the suffering man next to him was trying vainly to ease his position without help till a Japanese surgeon gave

it. When you knew him and knew Russia, his stupefaction was explainable.

While the wounded waited for the litters, which went laden to the new temple and returned empty, the Japanese infantrymen appointed for the purpose were separating and cataloguing the equipment that had fallen into the victor's hands. You had only to look at this for further explanation of the marvel of the morning. In contrast to the aluminium canteen of the Japanese was the iron-bound unsanitary wooden water-bottle of the Russian. Instead of the aluminium pannikin, light, compact, portable, was the bag of brown bread and the two-quart bucket with no attachment for the belt except the bail. In place of the carefully fitted shoes and tight leggings, admitting of rapid movement, were the clumsy boots, too big for comfort or for getting a firm foothold on rough ground.

The Russians had come in their clumsy grey overcoats, which tripped their legs when their boots did not, as if they were going to the rear instead of into a critical action in the darkness, where mobility and sure-footedness are first principles. Besides this, the Russian's trousers were all too big, as was his coat. Everything about him was like a paternal muffler, putting him at the disadvantage of a man swimming in an ulster and gum boots. The contest was that of a gamecock and a big brahma. The feet of one runs to spurs, and the other to feathers.

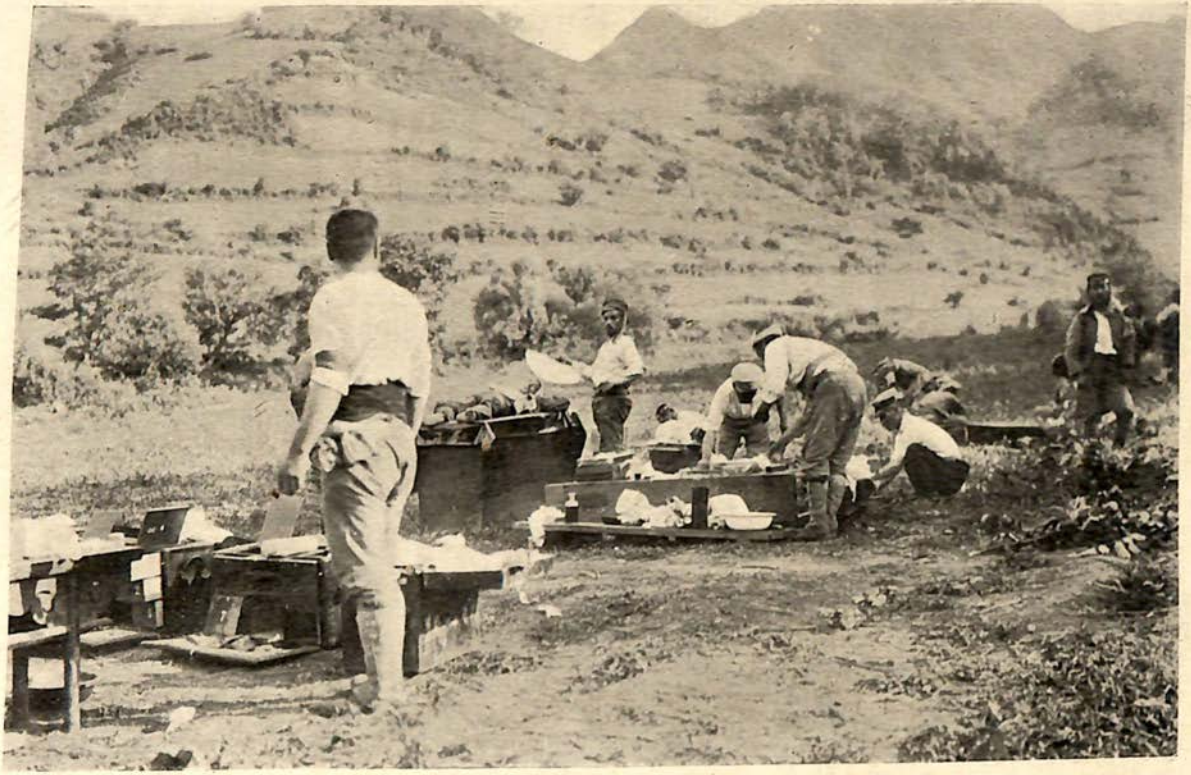
The Russian had come to count on his weight.

Let the Little Father and the priests give the word, and he would lumber on and over the savages. The Japanese has been training mind and muscle to meet an adversary of great reputation. His first shock of surprise at Russian slowness and stupidity has passed. What he did this morning he now regards as the natural thing. He now has the confidence as well as the skill. His possible error is that he may think that other Occidental armies are like the Russian.

Looking from the trench to the field, you saw prostrate forms, the splotch of white badges showing where they had been hit, or if they had none, the surgeon had come to them too late. Parties with spades were going about the field, searching in the bushes, and, when they came to a fallen Russian, bending over him and then passing on or beginning to dig a hole, which in a few minutes was replaced by a mound with a stone or stick which said in Japanese characters that a certain soldier of a certain Russian regiment was buried there.

There was one wounded Russian still lying on the field whose proper destiny is emigration to America. He alone of his comrades had not lost his humour or his faculties for occupation. When I approached him he was rolling a cigarette. At sight of an Occidental face his blue eyes twinkled and his even white teeth, polished by black bread, showed in a smile of recognition.

"Speak English?" he asked.



A FIELD DRESSING-STATION

"Yes. Do you?" I responded eagerly.

"No," said he. "Spretchen Sie Deutsch?"

"Do you?" I asked.

"Nein!" Then he asked me about the French in the same way. Here was his little joke, and he laughed over it heartily, just as if he did not have a bullet-hole through the thick of his leg, which had bled profusely.

When I returned from the field this Ivan Ivanovitch of Kharkoff was holding a reception. His Japanese friends had made him a stone rest with boughs for a cushion. There was no need of his rolling cigarettes now. He had a row of them and other offerings by his right hand, and he had been offered drink out of water-bottles until he could not swallow another drop. One of the dozen around him evidently spoke a good deal of Russian. Ivan told them where he lived, and he laughed and joked, but for such an intelligent fellow he was most stupid about the morning's operations and the number of troops engaged. On the strength of his smile, Ivan would get on anywhere in the world. Earlier I had seen a wounded Japanese who, too, had that gift of good cheer which must have made him a rallying-point of *camaraderie*. Half-a-dozen were accompanying his litter. In the pauses they bent over him caressingly and kept away the flies. He was badly hit, but still he was smiling.

A dozen rods away from Ivan was another Russian who had the top of his head gashed with

a bullet. Out of his mind, he would try to rise, and then again he would try to find his rifle and his accoutrements. The next man I came to had escaped death by the narrowest margin. The bullet had passed between the carotid artery and the jugular vein. Without bleeding much, he had a very stiff and very sore neck. Two Japanese infantrymen had appointed themselves as his guardians, and were escorting him slowly up the road. One was for making him a pillow out of boughs, and waiting till he could be carried back; the other argued that litters were few, and he had better be walked to the old temple, and this view prevailed.

By noon there were mounds over most of the still figures which I had seen on my arrival, and the wounded had been carried back. Only the fresh spaces of earth 6 ft. long, the grass trampled here and there, and the trench sprinkled with empty cartridge-shells, reminded one of the fight. The rifles of the company were still stacked, and the men were still on leave, wandering about at will, as they would in the streets of a garrison town at home, while some were still busy counting the rifles, the cartridge-cases, and the tin buckets which the enemy had left behind.

In a little war this affair would have been made the subject of songs in the music-halls and poems in the evening papers. In military parlance it was a disastrous attempt to rush an outpost under cover

of darkness. That sounds as proper and formal as calling out the guard. In fact, it was a struggle with cold steel between opponents armed with rifles that carry 2,500 yards; in fact, it had all the human elements and all the strategy, tactics, and unexpected contingencies of a battle compressed within the limits of the immediate comprehension of eye and mind.—*Lienshankwan, Manchuria, July 8th.*

CHAPTER XIV

SECOND ATTACK ON MOTIEN PASS

IT is noon. The morning's great work is nearly finished. The little infantryman who sprang from his blankets in the night to arms, the charge and the hazard of death, bends his back to the hot sun as he climbs the hills with the zip of bullets in his ears, his temples throbbing, his legs grown laggard from weariness, the voice of hunger bidding him stop, while the voice of his officer bids him go on.

The pursued Russian, equally the sport of weariness and fatigue, has a heart of lead. This beaten giant, stupid and soft-muscled, who marched through the darkness confidently to a daylight surprise, now dragging himself wearily over the slopes, has left behind on the ground dedicated to the success of a superior genius he cannot comprehend, blanket-rolls, intrenching tools, dried clots of blood on the grass, and his dead.

One side prays for more strength to carry his victory home; the other for more strength to assure escape and for time to bring in his wounded.

The combat has become the chase of the hare by the fox—tired fox, tired hare, and burning sun! But the fox is not after his dinner. That is in his pannikin.

Where lines of rifles strive with lines of rifles, suspense holds minutes in the balance until they have the weight of days. Now the air is clear and the shimmer of heat-waves rises from the valley. The damp and chill early morning when the fog hung long in the lowlands and longer in the high places, seems instead of a few hours away to belong to another season if not another epoch; for we have seen what is a triumph to one empire and a tragedy to another enacted between breakfast and lunch.

. . . . .

The battle began as soon as the light would allow enemy to distinguish enemy. There is no call like that which dawn sent over the high hills of the divide to Lienshankwan at their feet. It puts a prickle into the fingers' ends, wine into the veins, and a tempest of restlessness and curiosity into the brain. With batteries passing to the front, with ammunition ponies and stretcher-bearers on the run, with an army in all its carefully-adjusted parts responding with nervous alacrity to a sudden summons, with the pounding of distant guns and the crackle of distant rifle-fire whipping our impatience, we foreigners waited outside headquarters for two hours before we were told that we might go.

Of the ride over Motienling, seven miles from the town, I have already written in my account of the Russian attack of July 4th. Again the current of all things flowed toward the front. Except staff officers and orderlies, we passed no one going in the opposite direction until we met a small body of infantrymen coming leisurely back. Each showed somewhere about his upper extremities a patch of white bandage. This man had a hole through his trigger hand; that one a slash in the head where the hair-breadth's variation of a bullet's course would have meant death. In the first general marshalling of casualties the slightly wounded had been dressed and tagged, and sent to the base hospital on their own feet. They had seen the Russians run, they had the honour of a wound, and they might take their time.

When we reached the pass it was deserted and silent. The firing still sounded two or three miles away. Around the first slope and then up another slope, and then into a valley, and then up another slope we went, and there on the road we saw little sprays of empty cartridge cases gleaming under our horses' feet. These said that the line had gone on; they spoke of victory. A blanket-roll which its owner had dropped in his flight told us, too, that the Russians had come at least this far.

Breaking through the underbrush above the road, we tethered our horses. From this eminence we could see a Japanese line on a hill a mile or more

away. This we recognized by the glint of the officers' swords. In this clash of modern arms all that we could distinguish faintly—and that through powerful glasses—were some men hugging a hill as if they were trying to keep out of the rain. Their rifles were invisible; there was no smoke, of course. Only by the crackle that came from their direction did we know that they were firing.

At the new temple of Kwantei at the base of the slope were groups of officers of brigade and division staffs; some signal-corps men were carrying still another wire across the field from this nerve centre of action.

"To see! To see, and not get killed, and have something worth while for this article!" that was as much the central thought of the correspondent as driving the enemy back had been the central thought of every Japanese from general down, when dawn developed a hostile force in front of the pass.

More firing seemed to come from the left than the right. To our left was the grove surrounding the old temple. So we made in that direction. The blood of a dead Russian whom I passed in the open was already black and dry. In the woods the blood was still wet and red. Running as fast as the Russians had when they fled, Captain March of our army, Captain Vincent of the British, and myself kept on past the temple and followed a path which brought us into the open, where we found some protection from the few bullets that came our way.

Above us a company of Japanese in a trench were as industriously at work as the ladies of a sewing circle. At first I could not see their objective, from which probably they had never lifted their sight from the moment they had begun the pursuit; then on a bushy knob I made out the dark grey figures of the mark—not more than 1,000 yards away. Below us on the valley road was the deserted limber of some Russian battery which had had no time to spare when the knitting machine in the trench caught men and horses with a plunging fire.

Above the sound of the rifle-fire came the calls of two stragglers for their lost company; and from the ridge on our left came the reassuring answer of companies found. One fine-looking private was about to plunge through the woods toward his comrades, when I looked up to see a bullet hit a leaf just in front of his face. He threw back his head with a sudden halt as one does when he enters the wrong room at a hotel. "Oh!" he exclaimed, then straightened up, smiled his Japanese smile and went on. The way in which he and all the others had called signified that they were not stragglers from choice: they were as anxious to "arrive" as a guest who is late to dinner.

The company which was making its way to the top of this ridge lay down on its crest covering our flank. We gave them only an occasional thought and an occasional glance; for the work of the moment was being done on another slope beyond.

There the officers' swords heliographed their presence among the trees and bushes at the top, and there I saw the red-sunned flag of Japan held well out of sight of the enemy. The Russians were on the next ridge, where we saw the spaces between the trees darkened by the movement of an occasional figure. The Japanese, hugging their advantage while they raked the Russians with rifle-fire, directly began to advance by rushes. After a time we noticed some figures on the slope beneath the Russians. It was like fighting from housetop to housetop, and it seemed as if the enemy ought to have picked off our skirmishers one by one. The Japanese made no rigid lines; they were not hide-bound by text-book particularities. Yet these were men of the same division that I saw move with such regularity and precision across the sandy river bottom of the Yalu on May 1st.

Now they had a wholly different task, and they adapted themselves to it. They had been at home on the river bottom; they seemed a little more at home on the uneven hillside where every inequality speaks a language to the tired man advancing under fire. This dip with its partial cover may save a life; that rise may prove to be the skyline of killing accuracy. So the units (under cover of the fire from their support on the ridge at their back), never for a moment losing the aspect of a choate whole, got up the hill with the least exposure possible. A squad or a section seems to have the same tactical sagacity

as a company or a battalion. Panther-like, it will creep up till it is on a rise where it will catch the enemy's line at an angle. Smokeless powder is the cover of its cunning. The Russian, easily demoralized, only knows that he is under a flank fire whose source he cannot discern, whose amount he usually over-estimates.

The whole habit of life of the Japanese at home fits him for this hill work. When he sits he never uses a chair, but squats. Watch a group of staff officers in the opening, and naturally they drop to their haunches and lay the map on the turf. Thus they rest as comfortably as Europeans would in chairs. Lying in a trench, his suppleness enables Nippon Denji to hug the trench closely, and thus get a steady aim in a position which is strained and unnatural for the European—especially for Ivan Ivanovitch, the big, clumsy Russian. In the field Nippon Denji can drop as easily as a setter dog, and rise with the same spring when he rushes forward for another interval. His stature gives him the favour of mathematical probability; his nimbleness increases this.

The ideal modern soldier would be an acrobatic, highly intelligent pigmy who could shoot accurately and carry his rifle, his rations, and his hundred rounds of ammunition, and march as fast as the next. When Ivan Ivanovitch—he of the boots, the sloppy trousers, the big blanket-roll, and a bucket for a pannikin—lies to take cover, and when he rises to

advance, it is the effort of a camel with all his equipment hampering him. A hill is a ball under the Japanese gymnast's feet. To the Russian it is a creation of pitfalls and surprises. What will happen when we reach the plain?

Watching the side of the ridge occupied by the Russians, we saw the Japanese slowly taking position under cover of the furrow at the edge of a field of ploughed ground. The flag was not with them. In the old days of shock tactics the troops of a unit guided on their colours. Modern armies may not have this any more than the beating of drums to inspirit them. To-day the flag is useful only to fling to the breeze as a signal of the occupation of an enemy's position—a signal to the general and to the gunners. At other times, unless you want to draw fire, it is best tied up in its oilcloth case. The colour-bearer, who had shaken out his precious emblem a little below the crest of the hill when it had been taken, now rolled it up and started to follow the advance through the gully to the ridge beyond.

Our little veterans in the trench over our heads had ceased firing. As we passed them in search of higher ground for our citadel of observation, they were sitting about as comfortably as they would on their mats at home, eating their rice, their dried fish, and their tinned meat out of their pannikins. Their wounded had been carried away. Their rifles, which lay on the parapet among the piles of empty cart-

ridge cases, looked innocent of the mortal stings, carrying 2,500 yards, which each holds in its venom chamber.

This trench is worth noting. Twice the Russians have had it, and twice the Japanese have sent them back neck and crop. At the edge of the temple grove, where the road takes the slope, it commands the long valley of Towan as the western steps of the Capitol command Pennsylvania Avenue. But the trench was of value only on the Japanese side. For the Russians it looked into the edge of the woods. On both occasions the Japanese had only a picket and an outpost beyond the old temple. The trench was built for use when the reserves should come up to the assistance of the outpost. This time, as before, the Japanese pursuit tumbled into its lap and swept with their fire the enemy's flight before them. Our little men seemed well pleased with their morning's work. They had a good appetite for their wholesome meal.

Now, as I have written in my account of the action of July 4th, the Peking road, after leaving the pass of Motien proper, winds over the shelving hills till it descends in front of the grove of the old temple to the valley of Towan, precisely the kind of valley which would be illustrated in a physical geography. It is a trough between hills. To the north of the trench—on the other side of the apron-like entrance to the valley—is a conical hill, which is a better place to see from than to fight from.

Here we looked down upon the finish of the morning's fray; here, at noon, we saw the Russian saving what he could out of the wreck of the morning's hazard.

On the road at our feet stood the abandoned limber. Beside it I now noticed a dead horse, which was explanatory. No living thing had yet approached that spot where the drivers and gunners had cut their ammunition adrift in order to save their piece. Further on was the carcass of another dead horse—perhaps from the same team. While the hills teemed with human ants, that road was a brown, dusty, abandoned streak. To appear on it was to be seen by thousands of riflemen. The beaten highway in a mountainous country had become the one place that everybody avoided. It was the street (with spectators on either side) swept clean before the procession came along—only the passing hero here would have been pelted with something harder than rose petals.

On our right of the road, on the side of a high and gradual slope of ploughed ground, were two Russian companies in retreat. They moved in two groups—their intervals those of tired men who want air on a hot day. They might have been a leg-weary party of excursionists leisurely climbing a height to get a view of a town who were already fervently wishing that they were back at their hotel. They were not turning to fire; they were simply getting away—getting away in flocks,

watched by their shepherds, the officers, in the days of long-range rifles and smokeless powder. They did not go fast in order to economize human life; that would not have been brave. Also, that might have demoralized these grown-up children of the Czar, who would have kept on running each for himself. Their grey blanket-rolls, their black breeches, made them as fair marks as black ducks on a pond. While the Russian support was on the crest of the ridge above the retreating groups, on the first crest this way were the Japanese. You recognized their position still by the twinkle of the officers' swords not covered with khaki in the sunlight. That sword is the Japanese officer's weakness; he *will* carry it; he comes of a race of swordsmen.

An occasional Russian dropping showed that these two companies were under fire. Therefore naturally the thing for them to do seemed to be to take advantage of a diagonal gully which cut the slope. This they did finally, still in a mass, still plodding nonchalantly on, still being brave—and stupid. An intelligent force under the same conditions would have scrambled up the hill in half the time as units, which would have instantly and automatically come together under the cover of the other side of the crest. But the Russian must be kept in the flock. Elasticity he has not. He thinks for himself no more than the horses that draw the guns. Yes, the difference between Nippon

Denji and Ivan Ivanovitch is that of more than height and weight; it spans the difference between the Middle Ages and common intelligence.

The ridge which the Russians occupied was high, running out into the valley, with a precipitous descent like a promontory into a sound. On the other side the valley widened into a small plain, and here the road was occupied—with the procession of defeat. The habit of the Russian makes him take to the highway and to level places. Such is his plainsman's instinct that he will tramp under fire over even ground rather than advance under cover over the rough. When fire rakes the even ground, for a while he will march back—bravely and slowly back—rather than try the other way.

On this little plain we saw the Russians doing the kind of thing which is impressive at the Russian grand manœuvres. The ravine at the other side of the ridge was the natural funnel of retreat for all the scattered and beaten cohorts on the north (right) of the valley. Into this, galloping hospital waggons coming by the valley road from Towan disappeared. Out of it came in close order a battalion formed from the beaten ranks. Stretched across a cornfield on the left of the road, in the broad part of the valley, was a battery of guns, which had taken no advantage of the natural cover of the ground. The Russians seem to like a position where they can be seen and cannot see.

The gunners were back under the shade of a

grove of trees with their horses. A battalion of fresh reserves, coming out of the grove, deployed into skirmish line and support for the guns with European drill-ground intervals. Back of them the valley is closed by the slopes rising to the heights of Yantsu Pass, which the failure of the morning made again the Russian line of defence. Beyond it there is, I am told, no other equally suitable ground for a stand until we reach Liaoyang.

From the white pagoda tower on the first rise above the village of Towan, at the end of the valley, the Russian General saw the action of July 4th. The conduct of his troops was very brave, he reports. Two battalions advanced in close order and were repulsed and pursued by four companies. If the General is there now, he may say that his retreat at this point is orderly, and that his troops manœuvre beautifully. He may even apply this to the company which now advances at the base of the promontory. The idea, presumably, is to "creep up" and catch some of the Japanese infantry on the flank. They "creep up" in line on the river-bed, which silhouettes their dark uniforms. For just such, Japanese tactical sagacity is prepared. The man, the squad, the section, the company is each a thinking unit, yet connected with delicate, quickly responsive nerves to the whole. If a squad cannot cover this or that spur, a section joins it. If a section is not enough, a company comes. Some unit posted for the purpose grasped the

opportunity now vouchsafed. By the tremor of that line you knew the moment the fire came. And the fire was too hot. The line closed up like a camera. Then individuals returned and picked up the wounded.

Meanwhile we had hoped to see that Russian battery in action. The hill where we sat was not more than 4,000 yards away—a fair mark. Possibly this fact led to the General calling us back; and when the General calls you have to go, even though the drama is at the *dénouement*. As we drew away, the guns were still without their gunners, and the retreat along the road continued.

Having seen what we could of the finish of the fight, we now faced toward the ground where the struggle had taken place while we waited at headquarters and while we rode to the front. To the east the new temple of Kwantei stood out boldly on the slope. This was erected to the gods of the old temple of Kwantei (in the grove nearer the enemy) because the power of the mountain deity was supposed to have prevented the Japanese from crossing the pass in the war of 1894-95. (They went by another road.) This morning the temple was for a minute in the middle of the Russian line. Three shells were landed in its brick walls, but the big blue and white josses were not hit—which, according to Chinese logic, may justify a third sanctuary in their honour.

The pass itself was hidden by other slopes, but

our point of view lay directly in line with it and the Peking road. Why the Russians should now strive in two assaults to recover Motien, which they abandoned three weeks ago, is a strategic mystery which may possibly be explained by the fact that by the precepts of this war it was characteristically Russian. Kuropatkin's attempt was vital, and made under every augury of success that superstitious Russia of the Middle Ages could command.

July 17th is the Sabbath, which blesses every undertaking to the mind of the Greek Church. It is also the anniversary of the taking of Shipka Pass, the event of the Russo-Turkish War which most appeals to the Slavonic imagination. Twenty-seven years later the gallant success against one Oriental race was to be repeated against another; the landmark of Russian courage in the Near East was to have its counterpart in the Far East. This Sabbath was also a Saint's Day, bespeaking the power of the Church against the Heathen of the little islands. Moreover, for the first time regular Russian troops from Europe proper were put in the field against Kuroki's fight-seasoned, march-seasoned veterans.

It was a task to the taste of the hero of Shipka, and Kuropatkin first won place as Skobeleff's adjutant. In order to show his men what bad marksmen the Turks were, Skobeleff used to walk along the parapet of the Russian trenches before Plevna. He was the beau-ideal of the days of

shock tactics; he was the one for daylight surprises in mass, and as swift marches as hero-worship and priestly incitement could bring out of the moujiks. He could live high on six days in the week and charge splendidly on the seventh. Kuropatkin has carried the traditions of his old chief into the days of smokeless powder. Well may the Commander-in-Chief, himself, wonder why, when he did as Skobeleff did, his legions, instead of placing the flag on the heights, were driven back in tumult and confusion.

The famous pass, as I have said, is merely a cut worn by traffic in the long range of hills at the summit of the divide. These hills rather than Motien—a name—form the strategic position which Kuropatkin tried to wrest from Kuroki. His plan was to engage the front at Motien while a lodgment was made on the flank at Gebatow, seven miles away. Behind Gebatow is another pass. The Russian advance was made in the darkness by two great columns; one by the Peking road toward Motien, and the other by the road leading to Gebatow. The total force consisted of seven regiments, or in all about 25,000 men. The Japanese were first apprised of the movement of the Gebatow column at about 12.30, of that of the other column two hours later. A single Japanese company received the shock of the Gebatow column. Here, indeed, occurred, first and last, the crux of the battle, which no foreign observer saw.

That company held its ground. Before the reserves had come to its assistance it had twenty men killed and thirty-six wounded.

Equally as well as he knows that his ammunition is good, a Japanese general knows that any force, however small, will stay where it is placed—stay, alive or dead. One company is as much like another as peas in a pod. No special units; no Rough Riders; no King's Own; no stiffening of weak regiments with regiments of volunteers or regulars. There is an approximate level of courage and skill. A commander may choose the unit at hand as a mechanic takes down any one of a number of equally tempered tools from a rack. If you want a Horatius at the Bridge, take the nearest sergeant.

The Russians came to the attack with a splendid confidence—a childish, mob-like confidence. All the way across the Siberian steppes in their troop-trains they had been begetting this. "When they see us big burly fellows the leather-skinned Makaki (dwarfs) will run fast enough. They will find that we are no colonists and reserves—we are the Little Father's chosen." But the Makaki know a mark when they see one; and they like to fire at a column in close order.

Nature as well as Church and historical auguries were on the side of the Russians this morning; the Japanese had only skill and courage on theirs. Dawn broke into a thick fog. At six o'clock you

could not see a man 200 yards away. Pushing aside all outposts, the Russians gained the slope facing the ridges of the pass itself, and there in the mist they began intrenching themselves—to hold the front engaged according to plan. They did not seem to know that the Japanese had guns on the pass—information they had on authoritative sources as soon as the gunners could see them. It is demoralizing to be under shell-fire when no big voices speak on your side—that is an old, old military saying which has lost none of its sapiency with the improved deadliness and precision of artillery.

Besides those in front, on the Russian right came the sound of more guns. The Japanese division on that side had sent out a demonstration on the flank. The gunners could see little, but the thunders they invoked were a mighty warning. On the Russian left at Gebatow that Japanese regiment had gripped its hill with a steady outpour of lead, and Russian numbers could not be budged. Thus the centre alone was in its place, numbed with the fear that it was flanked. The position desired by the Russians had been reversed at the outset; the Japanese centre was containing the Russian centre, while the Russian flanks were pressed back. The rapier of his strategy had bent back on the fencer. Church and anniversary and cover of night and mist would not avail him when his steel was poor.

As the mist cleared the Japanese gunners saw in

the valleys into which the two roads had poured their reserves black masses for their target. Destruction was as simple as bursting a bomb in a room full of men. Shrapnel rained until the very road was clogged with the dead and wounded. No Russian guns spoke in reassuring tones above the confusion. If the Russian artillery came up at the gallop more frequently, there would be less of the hospital waggons coming up at the gallop.

An attack with seven divisions without support from batteries! What can this indicate, unless Japanese formidability has driven the Russians to timidity in risking their guns, lest they should lose them as they did at Hamatan? This slaughter-pen, where no blow could be returned, was a terrible introduction of the flower of Kuropatkin's army to "The Reab Makaki," as you would write the title for a magazine article. Without guns to support them, flanked by more than the demonstration from the other division—by the force of the brigade holding the pass (a brigade never for a moment in doubt of its abilities) that had crawled over the high ascents to the south, which evidently had not appealed to the Russians as a quantity in the game—the Russian line that had intrenched in the front fell back upon a scene of carnage in place of a reserve.

From that moment the attack became a chase. The Japanese force pursued twice its numbers over the ridges. Reaching a summit, Nippon Denji

hugged it closely, pouring in a steady fire upon the fleeing figures under the sight of his rifle barrel. When the Russians answered, it was always in volleys, usually spiteful and ragged. To fire at will (which is the only killing way, except when demoralization of a column caught within the range is sought) seems to be without the pale of the Russian private's sense of individuality and intelligence. He must fire as he marches—in a flock. (No doubt, in grand manœuvres his volleys are quite "beautiful," as the admiring princes might say.) He aims in the general direction of the enemy, with the result that he fires into the sky. When a line of Russian riflemen on one ridge are protecting the retreat of their brethren below from a line of Japanese riflemen on the next ridge, they disturb the Japanese comparatively little. And when all the pursued are either hit or under cover on the other side of the Russian ridge, the Japanese begin to advance according to their own system of tactics. Rake the ridges and then charge them, is the way—the way that 15,000 men sent 25,000 back to Toman.

Following the road back, after leaving the conical hill, I saw a dead Russian lying by the same bush where I had seen one on the 4th. He was of the same regiment as the other, and the coincidence was startling. (From the valley where the slaughter of the reserves from the shell-fire had occurred we were warned away by our chaperon of the staff. Our course lay over that taken by the Russian

advance line which faced the pass.) Prisoners were still being picked up in the underbrush. One Russian who had been found prostrate had been examined in vain for any wound. Yet it was with difficulty that he was got to walking. Apparently he had been scared stiff by his baptism of fire. When another unwounded man was asked how he happened to be taken prisoner he replied, "I wanted to be." When a contemptuous comment was translated to him, he said, "I have no interest in the war. I don't propose to be sacrificed." Coming from Moscow, he may have read Tolstoi.

The Russians had come up in heavy marching order, just as they did on the 4th. The field was scattered with pieces of equipment. To a private who lightened his load, the discarded blanket or intrenching tool might mean the difference between supping in the Russian lines or going to Tokyo as a prisoner. In one knapsack was a Jewish text. I wondered if the owner of the text, thinking of Kishineff, took any particular interest in Russian success in Manchuria. Among the pile of spoil at brigade headquarters, now so familiar a sight with this army, were three drums. Jewish texts and drums! A polyglot army of enforced loyalty against a homogeneous people with a common breath of patriotism! Drums in the advance line of a morning attack, at a period when next to the art of not being seen is that of not being heard!

In the temple were some of the Russians who had

been wounded by shell-fire. Their groans mingled in a low agonizing chorus. Among them were men too stunned to know that death was near; men who were smiling to think that their wounds were light and they might smoke cigarettes and live. A giant, blue-eyed, blond-haired fellow, while he groaned, tugged at the coat-sleeve of a neighbour, who looked at him in the puzzled scowl of poor brute humanity not yet ushered out of the Middle Ages. The neighbour, indeed, had a face of such hard unintelligence as to make comprehensible the outrage proved in this day's fighting against the soldiers of that Czar who was the author of the Hague Peace Conference. Hitherto, we have heard of Russian outrages; some of them unnamable here. I had been slow to repeat these reports. Mutilation of the bodies of a brave adversary by soldiers of a supposed civilized nation seems incredible.

Among those who were sent to observe the Russian advance was Lieutenant Seinai Yanagisawa and five soldiers of the 30th Regiment. They made contact with the Russian in the woods by the old temple. Two of the soldiers, Fukusho Yaesawa and Tokichi Nakasawa, were killed. The Russian line passed over the place where they fell. Afterward the Japanese recovered this ground. When the bodies of Fukusho and Tokichi were found, their heads — and all that follows represents surgical investigation and affidavits—had been laid

open by an axe or an intrenching tool, with the brain matter falling out! Tokichi had been shot through the aorta, and died instantly. Fukusho had been shot through the heart, and died instantly. Both these bullet-wounds had bled freely. There was no blood from the brain matter, plainly indicating that the blows on the head had been struck after death. In other words, wanton, butcher-like brutality had wreaked its vengeance on the bodies. Now I must accept the unmentionable outrages (which were supposed to be exclusively Turkish and Abyssinian) as also true.

. . . . . .

The General in charge of the Japanese division which had done this splendid morning's work—Nishi, who listens and listens and gives few-worded orders—upon our return to the new temple, we found seated on a grassy slope, smoking a cigarette. He had not even got up a perspiration on this hot day. His strenuosity is delegated, and that is the art of command. Some infantry reserves near by were fanning themselves. To a Russian who had not tasted their fire, these "Makaki" might have seemed quite effeminate. The fans which the little men use to cool themselves on the march are presents from the Emperor. On them is inscribed, in the handwriting of the Commander-in-Chief of the Army, Marquis Oyama, the words, "Do your best for your country!" On a hot day a fan may

beat up a breeze in front of a soldier's nose which will save him from succumbing.

The general whom we see in paintings — the general of the old days of shock tactics—used to swing his sword and charge. The brigade commander, Okasawa, was at this time watching the fight from the conical hill. Across the space of the valley was the white tower, where, no doubt, the Russian general in command looked on. And by the work of the armies that lay between them you may know the two. Our Japanese generals know their ground and their men; and instead of becoming intent on any one piece, they follow the game as a whole. They make generalship as simple as a good approach from the green. Not until you see the sweaty effort of wasted energy on the part of a bad player do you realize the skill of the good one. Let dashing heroes who place themselves with their point take note; let general staffs whose machine is not ready sue for peace before war begins.

Could the Russian general have seen the smiling Nishi, that undemonstrative head and front of efficiency (whose work on this day was to make him the first division commander in the war to be congratulated by the Emperor), it would have been the last blow. Well might the Russian general complain, "Oh! If he did not make such easy work of it!"—*Lienshankwan, Manchuria, July 20th.*

CHAPTER XV

A RIGHT WING IN THE AIR

WE were six weeks at Feng-Wang-Cheng. We have been in Lienshankwan four weeks; and we come here expecting to go to Liaoyang at once. In neither instance was our stop due to a check by the enemy. We have been more than punctual, and thus we have been an ideal swinging and isolated right wing of the closing movement on Liaoyang, which is now developing itself. For the Second Army to have to wait on us would be a misfortune. The First Army's place is to wait on the Fourth, which is between the two, and to go when it calls. We are now within three days' march of the railroad. With our next movement either Kuropatkin will have evacuated Liaoyang, or else we shall have played a part in the decisive battle of the campaign.

The advance of the First Army has been in three periods. In the first, Korea was cleared of the enemy and the Yalu was crossed and the war carried into Manchuria. If ever the Russians were kept guessing, it was at this time. Kuroki's move-

ment up the Peking road drew off attention from the landing of the Second and Third Armies. For the Russians, on one hand, was the possibility of feints and withdrawals on the Liaotung; on the other, the possibility of the First Army being reinforced and driving through to Liaoyang—that master-blow of strategic fearlessness which will ever be one of the fascinating "ifs" in the history of this war. We did the cautious, the safe, the academic thing, as the Japanese have done from first to last in this war. Meanwhile they have had enormous success in convincing the world of their capacity for the unusual and the unexpected.

What the First Army did was to stop at the first good defensive position where it could have a good-sized town for quarters. Feng-Wang-Cheng, then, was the second period. Here, if Kuropatkin should attempt to dispose of it in detail, it was perfectly safe from an attack by double its numbers. Indeed, I think that an attack would have been most welcome. Originally, we had expected the Russians to defend Feng-Wang-Cheng. Their rout at the Yalu gave them no time to take advantage of a fine natural position.

As we waited at Feng-Wang-Cheng every passing day seemed to superficial observation a day of advantage to the Russians; a day for increasing their force and for strengthening those defensive works which should delay our advance when finally it should begin. Time was what Russia needed;

time we were giving her, ran the argument. The fault of this reasoning was that it overlooked the fact that Russia had other places to defend. The pressure on the right was replaced by pressure on the Liaotung Peninsula at the point of which lay a fortress whose loss was irreparable.

Kuropatkin was marching to the relief of Port Arthur rather than to the attack of Feng-Wang-Cheng. He went, we now believe, with all the available force that he could spare from the protection of his line of communications; of Haicheng and Liaoyang from the possible landing of the Fourth Army at Newchwang, perhaps, and the simultaneous advance of ours. Thus the railroad was held in the vice of two possibilities. Equally with the cry of the Japanese, "We must have Port Arthur!" runs the cry of the Russian, "The enemy must not get between Mukden and Liaoyang."

The effort to relieve Port Arthur was met by the Japanese in the battle of Tehlitz. Here the Russians chose their own ground. They were attacked by equal numbers of Japanese, who drove them in rout from the field, and buried over 1,800 of their dead—or more than the total of Japanese casualties. Our own advance did not follow immediately. It was so timed in the general programme of strategy as to make all the Russian defensive works waste effort.

Yesterday I rode back to Bunsuirei, which was to have been the first strong line of defence before

the pass of Motien itself. An arm of hills, which here cuts the valley, slopes upward to a bald knob, where, through the weeks that we were at Feng-Wang-Cheng, a Russian look-out was kept. Approaching this position from the direction of Feng-Wang-Cheng, you see nothing but the green, uninhabited hills. This is as the Russian wished the Japanese to see them. Approaching from Lienshankwan, you behold heights that are scarred with lines of fresh-turned earth. From the main road an artillery road branches. It runs straight up the gentler ascents, and then, stone-abutted, it zigzags back and forth to its end and object—gun positions, ammunition chambers, and casemates.

As you make an incision in a Dutch cheese, so the crests of the round hill-tops have been cut into redoubts. With the same care that a cook takes in crimping a pie-crust, every tell-tale sign has been hidden; every break of earth has been sodded on the Feng-Wang-Cheng side. The same amount of energy expended on the old Peking Road would have macadamized that atrocious highway for many miles. The Chinese must have been vastly amused.

Our philosopher of the pigtail and the baggy trousers had been accustomed to the idle Russian. The busy Russian was a new order of being. After the idle Russian had broken from his comfortable habit, then to make no use of the result—that was "losing face" with the Chinese, quite. The old master ceased to be formidable. When the natives

catch individual Russians or Russians by two and threes in the open now, they beat them with flails and slash them with sickles and otherwise take a private revenge for the outrages their women folk have suffered.

Here, as at Ku-lien-cheng on the Yalu, there is topographical testimony of a Commander-in-Chief's change of mind—only in a wholly different way. On the Yalu he was prepared for a crossing at Antung instead of above Wiju. At the last moment it was apparently decided to make a determined stand, with the result that the Russians fell between that stool and the one of a rear-guard action. The Siberian troops who faced the assault lay exposed in the shallowest improvised cover on the crest of a rocky ridge, with a score of guns playing on them.

At Bunsuirei the preparations were not without a host; for one Japanese column marched peacefully by these works and looked over its shoulder at the seamed and scarred hill-side. Here there were no shallow cuts where shrapnel could easily find its mark, but trenches deeper than a man's height where the defenders might stand. The gun positions had been laid out with a skilful hand. How often in the weeks of waiting the artillery officers and the artillerymen scanning the slopes must have imagined the advancing Japanese under their shells, and in their fancy even pictured that joy of a gunner's heart, a column in close order within range.

Any one who views the position can think only of a death struggle; the redoubts suggest this. They provided that from their rear the infantry might protect the guns *in extremis*. If fall back the defending force must, it would be only after having cost the enemy a price in casualties and in delay.

In this region cultivation has crept further up the valley than in the neighbourhood of Antung, nearer the market, where good land is neglected; for the Chinese farmer migrates little in search of better conditions. From the signal hill itself twenty miles of valley, with the fields on distant slopes no bigger than your hand, is outlined before the eye. The winding road and gravelly river-bed are strung with villages, which, with the going heavy underneath from the rains that pour when the sun does not pour, are the milestones of the progress of a soldiery in heavy marching order and an army's transportation.

To the west the heights of the range which the old highway crosses at Motien Pass are dim in blue haze. That was the great second line—the main line—of defence. Here were miles of trenches and more gun positions that were never used. These, too, were built in Kuropatkin's time. The blame for this fiasco cannot be laid at the door of any old general who had been vegetating in Siberia—but possibly at the door of one who had been vegetating in St. Petersburg. He would not spend a life to keep a position which has cost him 2,000 casualties in a vain effort to regain.

Why? Another change of mind, perhaps; the pressure of other columns, perhaps; misinformation as to our numbers, perhaps. More likely, the failure of reinforcements to arrive at the time expected. The Russian still insists on taking up a certain position and waiting for us to attack him in front, never thinking that we may send a force to take him in flank. We came from Feng-Wang-Cheng by three parallel roads, any one of which flanked any position in front of another. In the fight at Chowtow —when this army brought its right into line with its centre and left—the Russians had equal or superior numbers, but a Japanese detachment creeping over hills which the Russians considered (evidently) quite impossible for military purposes, caught the Russian line that had held the Japanese back steadily all day at an angle which compelled hasty retreat under a killing fire.

The Russians suffer as much for want of information as the Japanese profit by completeness of information. Even if the Russians had not a single loyal native spy—and I sometimes doubt if they have—in their pay, and had to depend solely upon scouts, their ignorance seems inexplicable. Any Chinese who has been in the Russian lines is at the service of the Japanese. Japanese success has given him the confidence of his sympathies. The farther we go into the country, the more experience the natives have had with the Russians, and the more pro-Japanese they are. The point of

their hatred is sharp with the outrages that their women folk have suffered. Fine professions of commanding officers—a kind of death-bed repentance—do not work out in detail with the Russians, while they do with the Japanese.

If the Russian employs native spies on his own account, he does not know but that they are also in the pay of the enemy; he does not know but the information is that which the Japanese want him to have. It is too late now for the Russians to make friends with the Chinese; the first seeds were sown in the brutalities of the Boxer rebellion—I have seen them brain children in cold blood—and now they reap the harvest not only of these, but of years of occupation which have been years of fear for every peasant woman in Manchuria.

And here again we find the Russian uncertain of his own mind in his policy as he has been in strategy. His natural method is that of autocratic harshness. Between this and an attempt to placate the natives he falls. Some towns he has burned, others he has not. Sometimes he thinks of villages as future quarters for troops (when he shall return with those magnificent battalions whose great courage we now even begin to question), and again he would leave a path of devastation in the way of the enemy.

Even without every Chinese as an ally, estimating the numbers and positions of the Russians would not be difficult. They bring their bands and

drums, they camp in masses, they march by exposed roads, and the smoke of their camp-fires in open places ascends to heaven. Climb a hill and look into the valley, and you can pretty well guess how many of them there are. But this army which covers the approaches to these hills for many miles! —its size is masked even to the eyes of the attached correspondents. It is a force of seeming scattered units which at the word fly together into forces of surprising size.

A Russian officer, depending alone upon his eyes, might ride all day by the roads and paths, and when night came be uncertain whether he had passed through a district occupied by a battalion or a brigade. Detachments share the farmhouses with their owners, going as quietly about their work as if they were old inhabitants—never do they leave the natives houseless! Like the little men whom old Rip met in the Catskills, they nestle in the fastnesses of nooks and shady places without ever doing such a noisy thing as bowl—never! If half our force moved away overnight and you rode through the valley again the next day, you would notice no difference.

If we must wait, we could not have a better place. Vegetables are in season. There are cool mountain springs and clear mountain streams—and there are no mosquitoes.—*Lienshankwan, Manchuria, July 25th.*

CHAPTER XVI

BATTLE OF TIENSUITEN

AT three in the morning of July 31st all baggage and even all correspondents and attachés forsook the little town of Lienshankwan whose hospitality the Japanese had held with martial courtesy for more than a month, leaving fewer flies behind than they found when the Russians evacuated it.

On the 4th and the 17th, when our positions were atacked, the unexpected sound of firing had taken us over the pass. This time the engagement came as no surprise. Since the orders of the afternoon it had become a set event, like target practice.

All the ominous elation of a night before the battle was ours, wakening from the few hours' sleep that a correspondent snatched had the thrill of anticipation replete with every possibility of the shock of arms. We had time for contemplation of the fact that we were assigned to an army corps which, after all, was only a unit in enveloping forces stretching for nearly 100 miles; that we were

to witness a part of the greatest military movement since Germany launched her war machine against France.

From the summit of Motien we saw the first glow of light in the east. A thick mist had preceded it; a mist that might save infantry approaching a position hundreds of lives, and hold gunners in the awful leash of blindness at the hour toward which all their anticipations and preparations had been directed. But the mist went as quickly as it had come, rising swiftly as if to salute the dawn of a summer's day, when mountain-top was as clear against the skyline as the houses of a village against the foliage of a slope. Pack-laden and rifle-laden, attacking with the sun on its back, the division on the left—as it realized bitterly before the day was over—was to have no cover, except of earth and trees and growing crops, from their watchful and waiting antagonists.

On the ride out we passed no guns or hastening infantry. The whole fighting army was on the other side of the pass. General Kuroki was already on the hill at the back of the new temple (which, with the surrounding country, I have described at length in previous chapters). That thatch of tree branches which an infantry outpost had erected now sheltered the mind of the movement, who kept cool literally as well as metaphorically. What chess-player would not? On this hill, with his chief of staff at his side, he was to remain all day. The chief of

staff did the talking; he listened, and now and then he gave an order.

On this occasion all the carefully laid programme was not carried out. The central column of the division on the left was checked; batteries had to change their positions. In the face of good and bad news he was the same unchanging Kuroki. No spectator's curiosity held his attention to any one part of the field. He was playing the greatest of all games with his mind on team play. The sound that interested him most was not that of firing, but the click of the telegraph instrument, which left nothing to the doubt of vision, but told him exactly what each unit was doing. Meanwhile, the spectator, watching, through high-powered glasses, for flashes and smoke rings, saw the masses, the supers, the torch-bearers, and heard a roar and compassed their meaning as you get the outline of a plot of a play in a tongue foreign to you.

From the left, with the first streaks of light, between the speeches of the guns, came the drum-drum of infantry fire; but first to the simple outline of the day's problem! We held the higher of the two ranges of the divide, and the lower, the second, was our object. The taking of Yushu (Yushurei) Pass, which commands the Mukden road, was left to the division on our right—I am not permitted to give the number of any specified division—which operated beyond our sight and almost beyond our hearing. Yantsu (Yoshurei) Pass, which commands

the Liaoyang road, was the work of the central and the left divisions. The right and central divisions were to advance in line, and the left division was to strike Yantsu on the flank and the rear.

The spectator had the old citadel of observation which he occupied on the 17th, valueless for guns and infantry, and highly useful for attachés and correspondents who would see the action as a whole. This conical hill was one of the heights which form the reach between the two ranges where there are sugar-loaves, turtle-backs, camels' humps, some with ridges twisting in unexpected directions —a terrain like that of a loose cloth wrinkled with the hands till there was no set characteristic except that of irregularity.

At our feet lay the valley where some glacier once made a track for freshets to wear down, and at its end gleamed the tantalizing white base of the pagoda tower of Towan. For a month that landmark of our desire had tempted our eyes; and to-day we were to have it, or know the reason why. Towan lies at the junction of valleys; as well as at the gap that the old Peking road follows in its final passage, after its long route in the shadow of mountains, into the plain. By the road in the low places dwell the communes who plaster the slopes with the green squares of their tillage. Now the force which follows a valley becomes a target for surprises and plunging fire; except under the cover of darkness, the attacking force could not use the

Towan valley as a channel for bringing up its reserves. The Kansuiten valley, running north and south and crossing that of Towan in front of the tower, stood between Kuroki and the enemy as the Yalu had at Ku-lien-cheng.

The Russian defence, with guns in front and guns on the sides, a vast rise of mountainous heights, was as threatening as the bow view of a battleship, the white base of the pagoda being the bone in its teeth. On the right the angle was sharp in view of the gentler slopes which led up to the eminences almost on a line with the Peking road, which was the centre of the Russian position. Obviously, the way to take this was with pressure of infantry on both sides if evacuation alone was desired; on one side if a "bag" was desired. The first way was tried; then the second way was called into assistance; and the manner of this, as I observed it, makes my story.

Morning found the batteries of our central division in position and their troops lining the ridges. It was not yet their turn. If the division on the left was hidden from us as a body, we could at least see some of its chips fly. The crack of its guns and the bursting of its shells we heard as cries and their echoes. We located the first Russian battery to attract our attention by the burst of shrapnel smoke which it drew. Here, in a saddle between two crests, the gun positions had been cut out of limestone rock, 300 or 400 feet above the level of the

plain. As the ugly blue curls of smoke shot out and vanished into thin vapours, others came to take their place; and underneath them flashed the answers like the mirrors of a heliograph in a burning sun.

The blue bursts were three to one against the flashes, which came slower and slower, and then stopped. But still the thunders kept up. We had seen only one Russian battery. Scanning the heights for a glimpse, on the very sky-line one caught one, two, three, four malicious, hellish points of flame. They were as sudden as the flight of a rocket on a dark night in a little-traversed sea. Splendid was their message to any observing gunner, to whom they bespoke the apotheosis of his art. In a breath they told of arduous weeks of preparation for our coming.

There was a miracle of the spade—the effort that had carried an artillery road in old, old China to that altitude! In the lap between two cones and on the crest of one of them, snug as eaglets in their nests, these metal mouths were vomiting death to objects 6,000 or 7,000 yards away. No shrapnel bursts went that high. Here were gunners coolly at target practice, while their comrades in the saddle below took the revenge the enemy returned. Japanese skill in gunnery could not overcome the altitude, or the obstacles which armories turn out and money can buy.

I had waited in this war for some concrete illus-

tration of the superiority of the Russian guns. Now it was emphasized as plainly as the speeds of a 40 horse-power automobile and a light run-about. (The authors of profound exclamation about the amazing feats of the Japanese artillery which have been going the round of the press for months must have never looked in books, who confounded guns with gunnery.) To-day, for the first time in the five months' campaign of this army, the fact that Ivan Ivanovitch is a big, burly man, and Nippon Denji is a little man, unmistakably counted in the Russian's favour. If Ivan has big boots, big stretchers, big blankets, big commissary and hospital waggons, and big horses, he also has big guns. With the Japanese, his artillery has been sacrificed to the size of the horses. His gun is small, like everything else about his army. It is of an old pattern; the range is 1,000 yards less than the enemy's; the shell three pounds lighter; the muzzle velocity 300 feet less a second; and it can fire only one shot where the Russian gun fires two or three. Nippon Denji had led the world to a false conclusion by the way in which he used a poor weapon. But on the 31st he was not against such clumsy adversaries as those who made their guns the sport of disaster at the Yalu. Instead, he was against European trained men of that arm of the service which calls the best of the thin upper-crust of Russian intelligence for its officers.

As a hydrant commands a street crossing, so the

sky-line battery commanded the mouth of the valley from which the central column of the left division debouched at dawn. In confidence the gunners, who had plotted every distance within range, waited for their target to appear. One of the Japanese batteries took up a position on a ridge. From the bottom of the valley it was as obscured as a man in the middle of a flat roof from the street; from the Russian hill-tops it was as plain as the man on the flat roof from an adjoining church steeple. When that Japanese battery fired, the sky-line battery turned on the switchboard of destruction. One, two, three, four, went the screaming answers back over the fields of millet and corn, the groves and gullies, to their mark. With the first discharge they were shooting as accurately as the even quality of fuses and powder, the exactitude of chemical processes and angles, would permit. Without harm to themselves, they could keep up the stream as long as they had ammunition. The Japanese battery was a battery with its hands tied against a giant with free and militant fists. The Japanese gunners had a new experience. The sky-line battery proved the overwhelming power of artillery when there is no adversary to take the venom out of its sting.

For our guns there was only one thing to do. Japanese courage does not bootlessly stick its head into the cannon's mouth; it is a quantity most skil-

fully used. So our guns ceased firing till they should have a better position and a clearer field. The sky-line battery not only silenced them, but it was the main compelling force, I judge, in making the news that rumour brought us at the conical hill. The fire of the left had died down at 9.30; and then we heard that the central column of the left division had been checked. The "bag" seemed in danger. It was the turn of the central division to carry out its part. Still, all that we had seen to give proof to report was the unanswered flashes of the unapproachable sky-line battery; the wall of the Towan Valley hid all else from us.

While the left fought, we had watched the positions of our own reserves on the nearest ridge, and scanned the Russian heights in vain for a sight of a single infantryman. On the Kansuiten valley ridge was one of the central division batteries. This was approached by a gully leading from the valley of Towan. The slatey colour of ammunition waggons choked this gully at a point just beneath the crest. Officers and gunners had been loitering about at picnic ease. At 10—the most cheerful moment of the day for them—the Russian batteries began searching the valley of Kansuiten, and the Japanese ridge overlooking it. We saw the gunners taking their places in the Japanese battery. A few minutes later they let go. They had a few rounds of almost uninterrupted service while the enemy located their guns.

Then a battery high up on the Russian right took a hand. The figures which still loitered at the back of the Japanese battery did not seem much discomposed. They were at least taking their time to reach cover. But suddenly blue puffballs were blown out in every direction. From our safe position they were pretty to look at; their significance assaulted our ears when we heard the shrill flight of their projectiles.

The figures disappeared as quickly as a colony of prairie dogs which had been sunning themselves. Men and horses having separated for a breath of fresh air, now hugged cover as if it were an infant in arms—all because of the little blue rings of smoke, which would have been a strange and unaccountable bit of witchcraft to one of Cæsar's legions.

Into the guns, over the guns, this side of the guns, in nice spraying distance beyond the guns pointing above (the bull's-eye like the hits of a good marksman on a paper target), with bursts above and spouts of earth beneath, the fifteen-pound monsters with their quarts of spreading bullets came. "A little over! A little short! A little wide!" ran the comments of the spectators, all intent on the game, and not thinking of life and death. (But it was life and death, however, that lent the game its spirit.) We saw units dodging up and down to fire, and that was all. But to fire was to draw more fire—fire that we could not

adequately return. The thing was to move up and get a better hold on these long-range, rapid-firing adversaries. Our battery became silent. Receiving no reply, the Russians stopped.

This round, so far as the guns went, had been decided in the Russians' favour, I think. There was a lull through both valleys. The army rested; it ate; it made new dispositions. An artillery duel consists of intervals of ear-racking noise and of silence, which is like that of a tomb compared to the rasping mechanical purr of a factory-room full of looms. The fusillade begins with first one and then another taking up the refrain, and then from the whirlwind height of action it dies down one by one, till a last boom and shriek and crack introduces a recess. And by the way it dies down you may well judge which side is getting the better of the play. The rests in a combat of mechanical and chemical powers of destruction are as natural as the breathing spaces in brute conflict which take on the rude dignity of rounds in a prize-fight.

The lull on this occasion had an exception. One gun of the ridge battery kept on firing in an assertive solo at regular intervals. We saw the General and his staff go riding up the gully to the battery position, and finally he and a part of the guns disappeared over the ridge into the valley where now our other batteries and the entire right wing of our division's advance was hidden. There he directed

the advance to the final grip of the gentler slopes on the right of the Russian position.

You might have then thought that the work was over for the day. Noonday shadows crept lazily over the valley of Towan. The Russian heights seemed as innocent of guns as the hills of a resort viewed from the verandah of a summer hotel. On every hand was the silence of an uninhabited land. It was a silence more intense than any day of peace this stretch of the earth's surface had ever known. In ordinary times some native carts would have been creaking along the valley roads, and the population, unhushed, would have been going about their usual labours. It was a creepy silence, though the blazing sun illuminated all things; a silence charged with the thought that stealthy antagonist was creeping toward waiting antagonist. You could hear the tick of your watch and the drowsy hum of insects quite plainly as you sought a little shade and rest under a tree at the back of the conical hill.

At 2.30 our guns broke out with fresh energy. Those of the ridge battery having moved nearer, could now pay back their old assailant in coin of kind. One of its pieces spoke harshly, like an orator who had overused his throat. Some imperfection in the bore, lately developed, must have cut the shell case a little, and the revolution in transit produced a guttural that was out of tune with all the other shrieks.

Thirty-two pieces the Russians had in all; fifty-four the Japanese had in all. Every one joined in the swelling chorus. Smoke rings hung on the hill-sides like thistle blows caught by an upward zephyr. There was now no bad shooting, except from—from none other than the unapproachable sky-line battery, which swung its muzzles around to play on the right. One, two, three, four shells burst 400 or 500 ft. above the line of the ridge, and over the valley of Kansuiten, which the ridge hid from our eyes.

Directly we learned its object and the cause of the outburst of all the guns on both sides to their full capacity. Through the corn and millet of the slopes approaching the Russian position on the right we caught the movement of the Japanese infantry. Draw a line north and south through the tower of Towan and at right angles to the road leading through the pass, and this force was beyond the Russian gun position on the other side of the tower and the infantry supporting it.

The irregular terrain which had profited the sky-line battery, now made it the sport of its own satire. Its target was invisible to its gunners. It was firing by estimate in a position where the signals of results could not be easily received. The rapidity of the bursts still told that same tale of the slowness of the antedated Japanese guns. But the faster the fire the better for the *morale* of the Japanese. If the bullets had struck advancing infantry from such

a height they could not have done more than felled them. As it was, they were hundreds of yards to the rear of both skirmish line and support. The Japanese infantry, tired and hot, the Japanese gunners especially—in view of what they had suffered from these same guns—might well grin over a display of killing power as futile as tossing thirteen-inch shells into an untraversed part of the Pacific Ocean. By silencing some of the aggressors it might have diminished the stream of destruction that was flowing into other Russian gun-pits; but the officers in the sky-line battery evidently decided that they could better serve their country by indirect fire upon unseen infantry. Meanwhile the Russian "saddle" battery was receiving more than it could return. The flashes from its muzzles were becoming infrequent. One imagined that each shot might be its death gasp. Seeing their man down, the Japanese increased their fire. Ten shrapnel to one that was sent were burst over the position.

With the dust from a ground explosion still hanging in the air, I saw three curls of blue smoke, each fairly over one of the three guns breaking in as quick succession as you would flip out three fingers of your hand from your palm. Such a bull's-eye score must have been accident. Neither human, chemical nor mechanical accuracy would permit it. The "saddle" battery was the first to go out of action before a long lull in which antagonists again took account of stock. The sky-line battery which

made the morning artillery session in the Russians' favour, had now by its hopeless waste of power left honours even.

When the loud mouths spoke again, the infantry of the central division, with the cool of the evening at hand, was ready for the final act. Every Japanese gun was in action. Now and then, in a second when there were no reports from muzzles, no sound of the shrill cries of shells in flight, or the *uk-kung* of bursts, we heard, as you hear the rumble of city traffic in the lull of conversation, the rattle of the rifles with possibly the rake of a Russian volley. The infantry are the fingers that get the first grip of a position; the artillery removes thorns from their path. We could still see our reserves on the slopes at the right. The advance line, which had taken one trench, must now be almost under the guns, hidden from our view and the Russians', perhaps, as well, by fields of grain.

Over the rise of a knoll, where the valley of Towan broadens into the plain before the gap of Yantsu, we saw a battalion or more of running figures disappear into the kowliang. To-day for the first time the kowliang played a part for this army—a little foretaste of a part beside that it will play in the military history of two nations if we fight a decisive battle with Kuropatkin in the plains of Liaoyang before harvest time. The seed of kowliang is like that of the millet we have at home. Its aspect is that of Indian corn. With stalks a

little thinner, with leaves as plentiful, it grows to a height of from 12 to 18 ft. Only two months ago we saw the Chinese planting the season's crop at Feng-Wang-Cheng, fierce suns and plentiful moisture have already sent it to more than the height of a horse's head.

"What are our Japanese men going to do when they no longer have hills to screen the sudden flank movements of their agile, tireless limbs?" has often been asked. The answer is the kowliang, and when not kowliang, Indian corn, which is also plentiful in Manchuria. We had an object lesson to-day. All through the fight, with increasing curiosity, we had noticed (past the gully which led to the ridge battery) an artillery ammunition train hugging the cover of a bend in the valley. It seemed as unattached in this action as if it were lost, strayed, or stolen. All through the fight we heard the reports of a Japanese battery, whose cough, cough, cough, told the hill gazers it was on low ground, which we tried in vain to locate.

It was in the kowliang at the back of the knoll over which we had just seen the battalion which supported it pass to the charge. The perfect concealment not only included the men and guns, but the flashes themselves, which broke under the cover of green leaves. You gunners of the sky-line battery, so triumphant in the morning, it will be more gall to you to know that your fairest mark you never saw at all. These pieces in range of twenty Russian guns

THE JAPANESE BATTERY CONCEALED IN KOWLIANG WHICH THE RUSSIANS COULD NOT LOCATE AT THE BATTLE OF TIENSUITEN

were as unmolested as you on your eminence, and their deceit made the sport of their satire have a finer edge than yours. Need I say again that the Japanese never wait on the enemy, but go to him—which is the first instinct with a martial race? Need I enlarge on the nerve of that artillery commander who serenely took his battery into that position? It is by such nerve that victories are won.

Advancing infantry could have had no better protection than that line making its way steadily across the plain toward the mouth of the pass received from its coughing friends in the kowliang. When they should reach the pagoda they had the Mecca of their advance. The finish of the day's work was in sight. The sky-line battery was still throwing mirrors out of the window while the Russian house blazed; still bursting shrapnel harmlessly high over stretches of field already clear of our advancing right, and the desperate rapidity of its fruitless fire became the final touch of irony of the battle. But the voices of the Japanese guns were now the loudest; the Japanese infantry was forcing near the hour of flight.

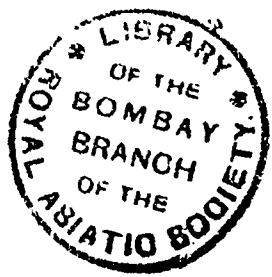
On the other side of the tower was a wooded hill with four guns. These and the Russian infantry trenches in front became in the last moments the kowliang battery's fair prey. Our infantry appeared and reappeared until we saw a line forming at the base of the ridge, on the point of which stood the pagoda like a lighthouse on a little promontory with

the fields of the plain for a calm, though, a green sea. Time was short for the wooded hill battery opposite. We saw the Russian infantry that supported it flying up the valley in scattered groups, and figures with men on horseback directing them, and shrapnel bursts from the kowliang battery remorselessly pursuing them. Suddenly something dark with horses attached was shot out of the wooded slope, and as suddenly stopped, like a toboggan full of people striking a stone wall. There was a moment's *mêlée*, and then we saw horses galloping up the valley. (The Russians had still another gun added to their list of lost, as we learned next day.)

On the left the Russian artillery and infantry still held that division and their line of retreat safe, destroying all hope of a "bag." Evacuation for the Russians was inevitable from the moment that we saw a Japanese officer, with soldiers streaming after him, ride up the ridge to the tower. It was good to think that that pagoda was ours. Now we should see what it was like; we should not have to look at it again as the landmark of a forbidden spot.

Though firing from the left where the Russians were covering their retreat, we might see no more. That was the verdict of the espionage which keeps the foreigners from too far exposing themselves. Riding back to where the pack-horses waited for us with a meal, we saw the staff at dinner in the court of the new temple of Kwantei. An officer who had just ridden in was silhouetted in the doorway.

Evidently he had brought great news, possibly of the success of the brigade of the centre division which, assisting the right division, killed, captured, or wounded 1,000 Russians in a *cul-de-sac* in ten minutes, with a loss of twenty on its own part. The Chief of Staff was interrogating him; other members, looking up from their plates, exclaimed their interest. The General himself was listening unmoved, just as he had all day. He had done a characteristic day's work. Against our total of 800 casualties, the Russian loss, besides the 500 dead they left on the field, must have been 1,500, including the mortally wounded General in command. —*Tiensuiten, Manchuria, August 3rd.*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CHAPTER XVII

AFTER TIENSUITEN

THE Second Army has followed a line of railway over comparatively level country; the Third has had the academic work of a siege. The First has been confronted in its vast swinging movement with the two strongest barriers that nature can present to a military advance. We have met the enemy in three decisive battles; one on a broad river, one of defence, and another of offence on the range which stood between us and Liaoyang. Strategic combinations in which other forces than our own played a part gave us the first line of heights on June 29th. By July 4th, Kuropâtkin had changed his mind again. He tried to shake our position in vain. On July 17th he came with sixteen battalions and failed again. On July 31st we drove the Russians from the second line of heights, which made the passes ours, as the action of May 1st made the Yalu.

Generically, the humblest soldier must know that certain roads lead to certain objectives. The knowledge whets his impatience. It makes the surround-

ings of temporary quarters miserably familiar in a week's time. For a month we had dwelt in the awe of a strong position before us which we must take. The gaze of our longing eyes was centred on the white-based pagoda of Towan. We wanted to see that tower as much as a country boy wants to see the city. Correspondents hoped that their recalls might be postponed until they should set foot on this forbidden spot, battery and rifle guarded.

On the happy morning of August 1st we knew that we should not have again to ride over the stony ascents of Motien Pass, only to descend as we had come. We were going over the field from which the enemy had fled, to judge, in the felicitous hour of victory, the manner of his going. To a soldier this hour is like the morning after the girl of his heart has accepted his proposal.

Now, the tower of Towan is a fine piece of old Chinese architecture. As a tourist, I might walk ten miles to see it. I might spend an hour in looking it over—but not when a battle had raged in the neighbourhood. On Monday morning last it was purely a symbol of the joy of possession, and no drawing card at all compared to a battery of dummy guns with which one Lieutenant-General had tried to fool another. On the rise where the tower stands, logs of wood pointing over a parapet rested on the wheels of Chinese carts. From the General Staff in St. Petersburg to this Chinese trick is a sublime step. Heads set with slant eyes are not so easily

deceived. The real battery was on the wooded knoll on the other side of the valley. If the Japanese had fired at the dummy battery instead of at this, the joke would have been on them. As it was, the biter was bitten with the most savage satire.

Five or six hundred yards from the tower lay the proof of slant-eyed perspicacity and accuracy. The dark thing with horses attached which we had seen through our glasses on the previous evening shoot down the incline and stop like a toboggan against a stone wall, was a field gun in flight, with the hound of shrapnel on its heels. The upset was as thorough as the telescoping of a locomotive and tender that have gone over an embankment. The ammunition cases had shot out of the limber and lay where they had fallen. The gun-carriage rested on one wheel, with the gun wedged against a tree trunk. In the battery's position we found the explanation. There lay three dead horses almost in the distances they hold when hitched in a team.

As usual, the Russians had waited a little too long; the Japanese infantry had crept nearer than they supposed; the Japanese guns had let loose all their blasts of hell at the critical moment. Probably gunners as well as horses were hit by that one shell, which meant the loss of a gun. With half a team and a weakened complement, the Russians tried to escape. The regular artillery road continued through the woods for some distance. But one of the escaping

guns, from lack of control over their teams or from the demoralization of the drivers, who evidently thought that they were shortening the distance, bolted down into the valley by a side road. One, as we saw by the wheel-tracks, went on. The other could not make the turn. Lack of horses or of drivers, or the fright of both from a shell, made them try to turn at right angles. Men and horses, caisson and gun, went over in a tangle. Perhaps already the whisper of pursuing bullets was in the ears of the gunners who got to their feet after the shock. (A dozen men, unfluttered by danger, as we learned the next day, were unequal to righting the gun.) There was only one thing for the Russians to do, and that was to take the gun breech and run. This they did. If they had not lost their heads, and had kept on by the regular artillery road, they would have escaped. This the Japanese would have done. Therein lies the difference in the intelligence and the ability of the units of the two armies, which every engagement emphasizes.

On up the valley where the Russian encampments had been yesterday, the Japanese troops were settling down in that fashion of order and cleanliness which lends to even the common soldier a certain æstheticism. In the houses and the shelters they had come into a legacy of swarms of flies and the filth which breeds them. The stones of the brook-side were spotted with garments laid out to dry. In the stream itself, the square shoulders and muscular

torses stretched themselves in the relaxation of joyous health and in recuperation from a day and a night on the field and the contemplation of rest, wine-thrilled by the recollection of victory. In a week you will find that the flies are largely exterminated, each soldier undertaking private warfare. You will even find him laying out little gardens, such as he has at home. Verily, by the numbers of its flies you may know an army. Whenever we enter a neighbourhood recently occupied by the Russians our backs are turned black with unwelcome passengers.

From their new camps the little men of Japan look up at the earth-coloured tracery of artillery roads adjusted with the same easy angles to a retreating gun and limber, with its six-horse team, as the curves of a railroad track to a train. The longest of these leads to that sky-line battery which, on the 31st, had, in a few hours, from a contemptuous altitude made the others supremely ridiculous and had its own futility made supremely ridiculous in turn. Without a shell against itself, it silenced batteries; and later in the day, by indirect fire, it threw scores of shrapnel hopelessly high over positions where there were no Japanese, while a perfectly-screened Japanese battery within easy range put the finishing touch to the battery on the wooded slope—which was the very point of the whole Russian artillery position set on the terraced heights in the form of a triangle.

The road to the sky-line battery spoke a volume of praise of some engineer. It held any soldier's admiration. It was proof enough of the academic capacity—the book preparation—of the higher branches of the European Russian army; a thing apart from the *verve*, the initiative, which makes counter attacks as the first premise of holding a defensive position. I can imagine this engineer's exasperation should he have seen the utter lack of proper trenches and roads at the Yalu, where vegetating Siberian garrisons, dreamily neglectful of the old-fashioned formulæ they had learned at school, went out, Xerxes-like in their contempt for their enemy, to meet with a surprise as overwhelming to senility as the absconding of the old confidential clerk is to an old merchant.

From the sky-line battery, all the Japanese positions from the Russian view-point of the 31st are revealed. Where the Yangtsu Pass crosses the second range, the heights project in an elbow that on its angles sinks by slopes into an enveloping valley, which opens into a valley at the right and a valley at the left. Attacking infantry must cross the levels—there was the nut—but once it was on the slopes, the heights formed a tangent. Nature made the positions for guns to delay the progress of a superior force. The gunners at the sky-line battery had the whole field of the advance before them. While the left division of the Japanese could not know by sight what the centre was doing,

the Russians might know as readily as you may see what is going on in two rooms of a house that has no ceiling. They could keep as cool as if they were on review.

From the parapet, those who had been with our left division the day before pointed out the abruptly descending gap through which the central column of the left Japanese division had debouched in the hope of getting on the flank and rear of the Russians. But the sky-line battery had the "drop" on the batteries of the central column of the left division and on all its infantry. All day a part of the Japanese line lay within 200 yards of the Russians. If Nippon Denji put up his head, Ivan Ivanovitch let go a dozen bullets. Nippon Denji is always ready to charge if you give him the word. But here the Russians had a grip of their hill, and they shot in a way that showed their disposition to stay. The Japanese had climbed part of the way, but when he put his hands on the window-sill his knuckles were soundly rapped. Meanwhile, the voices of the guns at his back spoke with no confident tone.

As I have said, the fine edge of Japanese courage is skilfully handled. So at nightfall these two lines were still hugging the crests of two ridges, with the forbidding and steep valley between them. There the pressure of the infantry of the central column of the army as a whole forced the Russian line to give way. Below the sky-line battery, in the lap

between two crests of another ridge, was the "saddle" battery. The difference between the two was that of the scene of peaceful target practice and an extinct inferno. If you wish to see what shell-fire may do, I commend you to the "saddle" battery. You may pick up shrapnel bullets on the road as you would pebbles. Within a circle whose diameter was not 10 ft. I counted six empty Japanese shell cases where they had fallen. A novice might have thought that these intact cups of steel meant that the charges had not exploded properly. The contrary was true. The cases should remain whole, so as to expel the 200 bullets which they carry with killing velocity. Two of them lay on either side of a hole that a common shell had made.

Common shell had burrowed the earth as prairie dogs burrow the plain. There were moments, as we watchers knew, when explosions were almost as frequent as the ticks of a watch. The swaths of scattered missiles and of holes mapped the accurate line-shooting of the opposing batteries on the plain. The Japanese seemed to say, "We will make you stop, anyway." They brought their guns closer; they concentrated all available powers of destruction on one point, as they did at the Yalu.

In the actual positions themselves the common shells had burrowed right and left and under the guns. Lay your hand on the parapet, and a shrapnel bullet was under it. Seventy-five yards

below the slope was the finest victim of Japanese accuracy that the war has yet brought forth; for gun had destroyed a gun. One of the spokes of the carriage lay where it had fallen in the emplacement when it was struck. How the wreck came to the position it occupied, the Russians must explain. The breech-block lay by the overturned piece, which bore the date of 1903, and must have only lately come from the arsenal. In the chamber was an unexploded shell, just as the gallant gunner had thrust it home when the fatal blow came.

But the Russians had paid a far greater price than this in tribute to the Japanese determination which redeems, by the way they use it, the inferiority of their artillery. Report tells us that here General Keller received his mortal wound. A shrapnel bullet in the hip for a favourite commander in this hell where Russian courage stood undaunted may well make a story which will ring through hero-worshipping, mediæval Russia. He could see well here, though not as well as in the sky-line battery. If his staff were with him, he exposed the very spinal cord of his force. Meanwhile, the Japanese General—he of a race that only half a century ago fought with swords in battle where the leader must lead with his own fencing arm—sat in safety, his Staff around him, in touch with all his units, remedying errors and meeting situations as they appeared. But this General had taken over the formulæ from the latest school—Von Moltke's

—and applied them. Keller was a heroic spectator, but not a modern commander. While he looked on, one of his batteries, for lack of information—for the lack of the closely-knit nervous system of intelligence—was wasting its shrapnel. He was as much out of place as the guard of a train on the cow-catcher. He was simply a magnificent personality; and nowadays, personalities win decorations, and machines win victories. There are no heroes in the Japanese army. A hero in a great land campaign is to-day as much out of place as a railroad engineer who cracks a stage-driver's whip out of the window of his tender when leaving a station.

Every battery but the sky-line one left some relic of hasty departure. That of the ridge on the south of the road had thirty-seven unexploded shells lying in a nice pile on the fresh earth of the emplacements. By what we see and what we hear through the Chinese and the prisoners, we learn how the enemy received its defeat.

The Chinese brought us the news of General Keller's death. In quite another way we learned of the presence of military attachés on the Russian side during this fight. Our Austrian attaché was sitting by the roadside where a Japanese hospital attendant was talking in Russian to one of two wounded prisoners.

"We were a party of observation," he said, "five of us. The little men got around us and I was

shot, and I said to the others, 'You get out and save yourselves!' But this big fool here"—and he nodded toward the hulking, blue-eyed fellow at his side—"he said he would not leave me. So he got shot, and here he is—the big fool!"

Then the speaker saw the Austrian.

"We have a man in a hat just like that on our side," he said.

"Is he a short, fat man?" asked Captain Dani shrewdly.

"No, he is tall and thin," was the quick response.

And then Captain Dani knew that his comrade of the General Staff had seen the battle, too. Though they are only a few miles apart, when they meet again it will be in Vienna.—*Tiensuiten, Manchuria, Aug. 10th.*

CHAPTER XVIII

A CORRESPONDENT'S LIFE IN MANCHURIA

THIS is less about myself than about those who have intimately concerned my existence for the last four months with results, sometimes strange and sometimes humorous. While the army has waged occasional battles the correspondent has waged a continuous one.

When the original sixteen assigned to the First Army started, we had a contract with a Mr. Yokoyama to feed us and transport our baggage. On demand he was to keep up with a column that was going at the rate of fifteen miles a day. Mr. Yokoyama was the victim of misinformation, a delusion, and the correspondents and we were the victims of Mr. Yokoyama.

In order to feed us in a mess, naturally, he had to keep us together. We were landed at Chenampo, over 200 miles from the front. Possibly the Staff had that fifteen miles a day in view, and thought that we would arrive in a decorous body, for that was four months ago, I repeat, when the Great System that serenely plays havoc with Russian

inefficiency had as yet had no field experience with one phase of war—the correspondents—which the Great System had not duly provided for. The sixteen did not wait on fifteen miles a day. They went as many miles as they could, each his own way, whether donkey-back, horseback or on foot. The canteen struggled on, coolie-borne, after individuals who cared little whether they were fed or not till they reached their destination.

These draggled, muddy men in all kinds of habits rode into a General's headquarters, which was the centre of the precise movement of 50,000 men in one uniform, and boldly they looked, if they did not ask the question, "Now bring on your battle! We're all ready."

The Great System was busy. It really had no place for spectators, particularly at rehearsals. It sets the limits of the correspondents' observations on the hither side of hills that hid the portentous work of engineers on the river bank. There the strange order of beings that had run away from their transport—the only beings in all that vast hive of industry who were not moving a pontoon, digging a gun position, or building a road or doing something toward the army's object—dwelt grimly in isolation in a group of Korean houses; they had travelled 10,000 miles; they had waited two months in Tokio, and bitter memory reminded them that they had been sent to the front as war correspondents.

The Great System decided that one correspondent might come from their "compound" each day and get the news for all. This was like standing outside the enclosure and having a man on the fence tell you who had the ball on whose fifteen-yard line. The Great System could not understand that it existed solely for getting a "beat" for each individual paper. Some correspondents had previously complained that they had not had the privileges others had. This led Great System to make a point of insistent impartiality. Then there were growls because it was not partial. Truly the Great System must have been sorely puzzled. When the Great System was ready for our cue we were taken to heights where we saw the artillery duel of one day and the battle of the next. Still, some correspondents were inclined to demand their money back at the box-office. No one man had seen more than any other.

Meanwhile, the canteen in broken parts had arrived and set up its tent among the Korean houses where the correspondents were encamped. Mr. Yokoyama had not come to Korea himself. His affairs were in the hands of a manager. The manager could not speak any English. This saved him many comments, which were toned down by indirection. One cannot in reason send for an interpreter to say things that are better not printed, such, for example, as "——!"

Mr. Yokoyama had taken his idea of a cam-

paigner's diet from the tourists who frequent the hotels of Japan. He thought they subsisted entirely upon a meat diet. He had not brought much to eat, and that consisted mostly of canned sausage. One day I asked the manager if I might not have some boiled rice. A small bag was sent to my tent. After discussion with the cook and assistants, it had been concluded that I wanted the rice for poker chips.

Aside from feeding us for a stipulated sum, the canteen was to bring mineral waters on sale. In mentioning our wants before we left Tokyo, one correspondent had remarked that a little champagne was good in case of sickness. Evidently Yokoyama thought that we were all going to be ill all the time. (For there is a bar in the Imperial Hotel frequented by tourists.) He brought far more bottles of champagne than sausages—and the champagne was as sugary sweet as ever Latin drank. Our meals became town meetings, where, individuals—and there are as many individuals among the correspondents as there are divisions in the army—set out their likes and dislikes.

"Treacle is what you want!" said a spindling Englishman who had served in South Africa. "Give me treacle, I say. I told these bursters to bring treacle. With plenty of treacle—good old black treacle—you can ride day in and day out and be as fit as a fiddle."

"Cæsar conquered the world on treacle," observed

"Jimmy" Hare, the oldest of us and the *enfant terrible* of the camp. "I know all about it now. He slid down the Alps on it, and chucked it all over the Gauls and gummed 'em up so they couldn't fight."

"Rather liverish, I should say," remarked our academic correspondent.

"Bacon and beans are the thing," said Collins, "and big fat flapjacks for breakfast. They're what; they keep your ribs apart."

"'Tucker' is what you want," said an Australian, who represents a British paper. "Tucker" was always his cry. He declined to go into details.

"Italian sausages!" shouted John Bass. "I knew there was something wrong about this canteen from the start, and I laid in an Italian sausage. You can use an Italian sausage for a brickbat, insect powder, a tent peg, a pillow, and to grease your boots with. When you have to eat—actually eat and so destroy—other things to satisfy your hunger, you have only to smell of an Italian sausage and your hunger is gone."

There was only one way to obtain coherency of opinion and action, and that was to elect a mess president. Nominations being in order, each subscriber turned his thumb toward his neighbour. Alphabetically was fair, every one thought, except John Bass, and he was *it*. Poor old Bass! He had troubles of his own as well as those of others. The Italian sausage was helpful in reviving his nerves.

Our understanding in Tokyo had been that not only were we to pay all bills by cheque, but by cheques we were to draw cash whenever we needed it. In Tokyo, indeed, there was no accommodation which was not readily granted. Alas, our manager had not funds even for coolie hire. From Wiju to Antung we provided our own coolies while the canteen kept on feeding us. The supply of sausage, but not of sweet champagne, ran out. We took to eggs and chickens morning, noon, and night.

"If we only had a little treacle to go with them —good old black treacle."

Our Australian still called for "tucker."

The one Frenchman was equally explicit. Occasionally he would rise to demand,—

"For what do we pay our fifteen yen a day?"

The canteen was impossible. We reverted to a natural state of individualism. Behold three of us now, Collins, Hare, and myself, camped beside a mountain stream and a mountain brook. Having brought no cooking outfits or proper supplies, we "rustled" the best we could. A few cans of ancient corned beef and a few cans of counterfeit condensed milk (made of corn starch) were found in Antung itself. At Pingyang a Frenchman had a store, but he was not renewing his stock. (It was in this store that "Jimmy" Hare ate a whole bottle of olives without getting indigestion.) Seoul is farther than Pingyang, and, in all, more than 300 miles from our present base. There is also European

food in Japan, which you may have by sending a man all the way there and back.

At Tiensuiten a plain ham becomes a more expensive luxury than red-head duck in London, and a can of Californian fruit a luxury like hot-house peaches. Even cash is costly. Eight days ago we sent a servant all the way to Antung to get 1,000 yen in specie from the branch of a Japanese bank that is already open there.

Drawn up beside our tents are the three Chinese carts which form our commissariat train. It is with fear and trembling that we think of the size of the retinue which has to be fed, bound as we are by the customs of the East. Sometimes the foreigner tries to reform the usages of the teeming millions, and the East smiles like quicksand under the sun and swallows him in. The union decrees that there must be two Chinese to a cart, and injunctions are out of the question. Besides the Chinese we have two Koreans. One takes charge of the pack ponies; the other is Daniel Webster. Daniel's chin is missing; his forehead modest.

"I didn't make my face, and I don't work with my face," he says.

He came to us as a coolie—in the dirty white cotton garments, the queue, and the top-lofty headgear of his kind. To-day his hair is clipped short, he has a jaunty little white outing cap, European coat, and golf breeches, while there hangs from his pocket, in further proof of hope, prosperity, and progress, a

German silver watch-chain, with links an inch and a half long. Where he got these things his employers, least of all, should know. He takes especial care of the "cap." That is not for wear when he washes dishes or digs trenches. Probably no citizen of the United States could walk further in a week than "Daniel." His pipe-stem legs are like stilts in the steps they take. He goes joyfully on any errand, however hard the rain, however deep the mud. Should our caravan move on to St. Petersburg, you would still find "Daniel" attached. The subject of Korean sloth and official extortion has for the first time found out what a joyful living world of opportunity there is outside his native "Hermit Land"—and all this on £2 a month.

The Master of the Household, in charge of all the retinue, is Kochi, our interpreter, who speaks excellent English. On this campaign he has learned many things which were not taught at Cornell, where he went to school. He draws maps, translates documents, keeps the Chinese in line with the few words of their language that he has learned. He has never yet admitted that he was tired or hungry.

Early in the spring, when we had to live entirely by the grace of cans, we watched the growing corn, beans, and potatoes with encouraging eye. We have them all on our table now. Fowl, however, are growing scarce in the land. They are not to be

had by beggary, purchase, or strategy. The Russians were here before us, and the strays they left behind Japanese thoroughness has gleaned. (One advantage of a retreating army is that it has first call on the chickens.) The thrifty Chinese hides the remaining few as the ancestors of another generation.

And this brings us into the department of Kobayashi, our forager. He took the place of Kurotaki, who went home ill. I have said that no one in the canteen spoke English, and it was from the wreck of the canteen that we drew Kobayashi. He did not speak English at the time.

"Hour or hive words," he said.

As a rule, when you engage a boy, he professes to know a lot of English, with the result that you find he knows none at all. Kobayashi's policy was the contrary. He took us on trial. On some days, when he had concluded that it was worth while receiving us into his confidence, we found that he knew colloquial English excellently.

According to his own tale, Kobayashi has been a miner in Australia, a sailor on many seas, not to mention that he helped to build the Brooklyn Bridge. Reckoned up in years, his service makes him a centenarian. As to his actual age, you can no more tell it by his wrinkled face than the age of a pine tree by its knots.

If we want anything done that is not just in the line of the other "boys," we call Kobayashi.

"All the time work for Kobayashi," he occasionally grumbles. "Kobayashi up three hour clock, build fire, boil water! Go to bed late night! Gentlemen want anybody when everybody sleep call Kobayashi. Damn!"

"Come! Come, Kobayashi, you are unhappy to-day!" we rally him.

Then over that wrinkled brown face will creep a smile up to the eyes that twinkle between their slants.

"I dunno, sir. All right," he says.

This morning I asked him if he thought the weather would clear. He squinted quizzically and long at the four points of the compass and said, "I dunno, sir." But that was merely Japanese self-deprecation, and I knew it. He had a most definite opinion, as he promptly showed. "Wind sou'-sou'-west, sir. Yes, sir, it going to rain some more."

Incidentally Kobayashi waits on table. When he grumbled, sailor fashion, once, we gave this task to another. Then we saw that wrinkled face (so unknowing or so knowing as it wills) in the background, critical and wistful. We restored him to his place.

About our beverages Kobayashi ever maintains a polite fiction.

"Cocoa, tea, coffee?" he asks.

We call for tea or coffee.

Then Kobayashi shifts from one foot to the other, and utters a little giggling, "He, he!" to accompany his grin.

"Cocoa!" we say.

Cocoa is all we have.

Kobayashi and our Chesterfieldian groom are such stuff as the Japanese army is made of. We had originally a regular groom with high recommendations, whom we sent home for drunkenness, neglecting his horses and trying to slay our neighbours' grooms. Ugajin was simply a boy of seventeen or eighteen years, whose father owns a shop in Nikko—a boy who wanted to see a battle, a real battle.

He won the trio with his bow, the bow which he has carried right through the campaign. The horses are sleek and well cared for, and in odd moments Ugajin works Japanese landscape effects in our tent yard with admirable taste—the same Ugajin, who, when some Russian scouts were reported in the corn near by the other day, rushed out to assist the soldiers with a stone in hand, while Kobayashi seized a club. Naturally this is a martial race.

Whenever there is a battle we get a new camp, and then we wait until the strategic demands of the whole calls for another advance. The Great System understands us a deal better than it did at first. It knows now that we are not here to give information

that will benefit the enemy, though that information is the kind that makes news for the cable men. And there you have the rub between the arm of war and the arm of publicity.—*Tiensuiten, Manchuria, Aug. 20th.*

CHAPTER XIX

A LETTER IN CAMP TO NIPPON DENJI

I FIRST knew you when we fought our way through the Boxers to save the Legations; and you did most of the fighting without ever a look at the gallery, and marched into Peking clean and erect and cheerful, with no stragglers. Watching your skirmish line on one side of the road and the Russian on the other, we observers made certain prophesies which military wiseacres who had not been on the march scouted. We listened to their scepticism, and smiled as any one may smile when it is so easy to be right as it was that day on the advance into Ho-she-wo, when the little men left the big men straggling behind them in the dust. You seemed then a veritable machine of a soldier, Nippon Denji, who could do a goose-step all day and wash away all your fatigue with a bath at night.

Now I know you better; not to say that I know you well. There is a barrier which is said to prevent that. You are yellow and I am white. You come from one end of the earth and I from the

other, and all the heresies and the prejudices which may descend to an island people belong to us both. The Supreme Being made us quite different, I suppose, so that each could say that he himself was the natural being and his way the natural way.

My eyelids are horizontal and yours are on the slant, and mine are as odd to you as yours are to me. When I write, it is straight across the page, with letters into words and words into thoughts. You have no alphabet; you write down the page with signs that mean ideas. You start at the right hand and write backwards—or is it that I write backwards?—and this makes your book end where mine begins. This has been the way of my people for 2,000 years, and for 2,000 years it was the way of the people who gave my people their first learning. Your way has been the way of your people for 2,000 years, and it was the way of the people who gave your people their first learning for more thousands of years than history dares to count.

The wise men who know—if they have not changed their minds lately—say that we are all from a common stock that started from some scientific Garden of Eden. (Were your eyes slanted or ours straightened *en route?* If we knew that, we might settle which really does write backwards.) Your ancestors went to the East, and mine to the West, and we, for one thing, had a keener memory of the fig-leaf incident than you. You went to the

farthest islands and so did we Anglo-Celts, changing all the time till we were distinct from another people with quite a different language and quite different characteristics, who were only across a channel from us. (We overcame that a little. We do think that a Frenchman may be half-way decent, now.)

In ancient times you went to sea mostly to fish; and sometimes to invade Korea. We went to sea for trade, for war, for glory, and for piracy and for Christianizing strangers, and unquestionably, all in all, for the good of the world. Three countries, England and Spain and Holland, which stole the sea bottom for its gardens, had so much of the ocean around them that they kept going farther and farther, till America was discovered, and eventually Spanish priests came to one of your southern islands from the Philippines, which Spain had conquered. They made converts; after them, the warriors at their backs might have been expected to make conquests. You feared this, and rightly, if Spain had not been on the decline, if the other European States had not been so busy quarrelling over India and America and other near places, and that Japan was too far afield.

At the time, in the condition of your society, a new master, the "Shogun," established himself at Tokyo, with a closer-knit governmental organization, while the Emperor at Kyoto became a figure-head. The Shogun did a thing unique in all history. He

closed the door of his country to all foreigners, and penalized an attempt at migration with death.

"You mind your business; we will mind ours," he said to the world. "You leave us alone on our little islands, and we will not trouble you on your continents."

No anti-Imperialist could have asked more. To clear the way, a large number of Christian converts were massacred. This was most religiously mediæval. It is no great secret, Nippon Denji, that some of our forebears did equally wicked things. We don't talk much of them, especially when impressing the Orient, for we are much ashamed of them, and glad they are not living to-day.

For 300 years Japan lived within herself a hermit among the nations. Your Shogun was lord over many governors of provinces, who were hereditary, as he was. In time their families became anæmic and the prey of formality. You, Nippon Denji, you, the common man of Japan, were learning to read and write and think. You travelled to behold Fuji, your beautiful mountain, and your waterfalls and temples, which your artists painted on kakemonos that were so cheap a coolie could buy them—and the coolie did buy them. Yes, you were getting stronger and the crust of feudal lordship over you was getting weaker. The time was near when you would break through and a new order of society would be the result.

Meanwhile, the island people on the opposite side of the earth had found other uses for the energy of

steam than making a teakettle-cover dance. This invention turned seas into ponds and oceans into lakes. You could no longer be unsociable, if you would, Nippon Denji. With the commerce of the world going past your door, the time was coming when you would have to open it, or some one would follow a knock with a blow. Commodore Perry was very gentle, considering the way that such things are usually done. He came into the harbour of Tokyo with these new kind of vessels which belched smoke from a funnel amidships (the thing that made it go without sails) and could belch something worse from the funnels that projected from the sides. His squadron was strange to you, as it would have been to the Romans if it had sailed up the Tiber in Scipio's time. And you felt just the way that the Romans would have felt if a modern squadron had broken out of the sea and trained its guns on the Capitoline Hill, and sent word ashore that the officer commanding would like to arrange a treaty. Probably the Romans would have made a treaty just as you did: but the necessity would have hurt their pride a little.

You soon learned that what one foreign nation had gained all the others insisted on. Many treaties followed the first, and inch by inch the foreigners gained points, till they had their own concession in a harbour where they lived under their own laws. Still they asked for more; and still the Shogun temporized. The daimyos began to act on

their own authority. If the Shogun would not resist the barbarians, they would. The daimyo of Choshu had some miserable forts at Shimonoseki Straits. He fired on foreign merchant ships that tried to pass against his orders. Were not the Japanese the best swordsmen in the world? Only let them go, and they would make short work of these rude, ill-mannered barbarians. The daimyo lined up his samurai with their bows and arrows against an allied fleet, which battered down his forts as easily as they had those of other yellow races. From that moment, the Japanese knew that the Tories were wrong as well as they knew that security through the Shogun was hopeless.

Aboard one of the ships of the fleet were four young samurai (including the present Marquis Ito and the present Count Inouye), who had shaved off their queues and ran away from Japan, on pain of death, to see the world. They went ashore, tried to reason with their sovereign lord, and were stoned for their pains. After the bombardment Choshu turned to them. Through all Japan ran like a flame the realization of the situation. Every Japanese, of course, had no doubt but his civilization was superior to the Occidental. He saw his country with her priceless pearl of independence at the mercy of the so-called barbarians. The fate of India was an example of what befell the weak and the disunited.

Ito and Inouye said that the first thing was to

pay the indemnity. The next thing was to get ships and guns like the foreigner's, and turn them against him when they need be. The old dynasty of the Shogun and the daimyos fell of its own weight. But the lower ranks of samurai, more or less studious, too poor for dissipation, always exercising, had the strength of mind and body to form a new ruling class. At Kyoto was the lineal descendant of the sun goddess, at once an emperor and a divinity. The new movement carried him to Tokyo as its head. He ruled in reality again. Diplomacy, Japanese diplomacy, played for time, while the army prepared.

Under the old *régime* about a fourth of the population had been idle. They were the samurai of different grades, retainers of the nobles. The clan loyalty of Scotland was pale beside theirs. Noble fought noble in continual internal strife. If the honour of a samurai was impugned, he committed harikiri. His moral code was bushide; which means that honour, as he viewed it, was before all things. You, Nippon Denji (man of Japan), were the worker. Thanks to your travels and your education, a united Japan was coming to mean more and more to you and a province less. Suddenly in this new conscript army the boy from the fields drilled in the same awkward squad with the samurai; rifle and bayonet took the place of samurai sword. You know how your country ran to the fad of foreign things at that time. Old

armour and old blades were sold for a pittance. All Japan turned to the warlike methods of the foreigner. Bushide became the privilege and the duty of the commonest man who was accepted for the army. In place of your daimyo was your deified Emperor.

Many fictions have been printed in foreign papers since you took the centre of the world's stage. They give you a strange fatalism; a true Mussulman's carelessness about death. When Chefoo lacks for news, it tells the world that some officer has committed harikiri. I have yet to hear of a single instance with our army. Suicide, besides, is not limited to Japan alone. When a captain goes down with his steamer rather than save himself, the meaning is the same as the harikiri of a Japanese officer on a captured transport. Harikiri is a particular form of death adopted because it tested the victim's nerve in face of the inevitable. Harikiri was never frequent. Duels were not frequent in the last century; but to read fiction you would think that gentlemen fought every day.

I have found you different from the Chefoo idea. I have found that you have that same love of life that good soldiers usually have in that you know how to sell it dearly. It has been said that your one ambition is death in battle. I have found that your ambition to kill Russians for your Emperor is much stronger. You are the least careless about death of any veteran soldier I have ever known.

That is why you are such a good soldier. In your lines I have seen less of the bravado of the veteran who heedlessly exposes himself when lying under cover waiting for a charge, of the officers who heedlessly stand up with their line, than in any other.

Of course, I have heard your officers use that stock expression, "to die for their Emperor;" their practice is better. It is to make their lives just as valuable to their Emperor as they can. Fatalism embraces the idea of "I don't care." And you *do* care, Nippon Denji. Fatalism says that you will die when your time comes—why bother? It implies too ready an acceptance of the inevitable to make a good soldier. Frequently, one race uses it as an excuse for another's courage, thereby magnifying its own as something dependent upon a higher quality. In Asia you find many fatalists, but most of them will scarcely lift their hands to prevent death. The Chinese have that quality much more than you; for you never accept death as long as you have the strength to send another shot at the enemy.

The reward in heaven which calls some soldiers is not for you. Your reward is in the honour that your death for your Emperor brings to your family. In your village the people will point out your house and your father and mother—more especially your mother—and say the magic words about a son who has fallen for his country. In other lands, too, houses and mothers have that pride. But the

Japanese mother does not weep—not in public—when she hears the news. The custom in Japan is to smile in public, and that is the outgrowth of causes as clear as make it usual to give a man on foot on a remote country road a "lift" in a carriage, and not to do so in Piccadilly or Broadway. This does not mean that that mother does not care; far from it. But she is the mother of a samurai now.

You must not and do not show your feelings, Nippon Denji. None the less, you suffer. I have seen you struggling forward with your limbs aching as they took their short and stubborn steps; but if I smiled, you smiled back. I have heard a groan from a cot in a field hospital, and when the occupant saw a foreigner was present, he drew his teeth together and tried to smile. But I have seen that same convulsive effort of pride in white men's armies. The samurai youth were taught to bear pain and hardship without murmur. Besides, we foreigners think that your simple life saves you from the "nerves" that curse Europeans. Or is it that you are simply trained not to have them, as the Christian scientist trains himself to think that there is no illness?

Nowhere do you better show that you are a true samurai than on the march and in camp. You are obedience itself. Your officer provides for everything in the text-book, and you do as he says. The fault with most armies is that human nature does not permit of everthing in the text-book. If you

are tired, you do not throw off your blanket and knapsack; you keep on with it. The road behind a regiment is as clean of Japanese equipment as that before it. You have a marvellous way of making yourself comfortable when you break ranks. That is because you squat instead of sit, and some cornstalks tied together make a shady place for you. A true samurai private bathes frequently, washes his clothes, and observes sanitary regulations. You do. That is one of the pleasures of being attached to your army. Very rarely do you take too much *saké*. Property may be left about carelessly. It is safe from your hands. Not even horses are "taken" if not watched in this army. That is wonderful—wonderful!

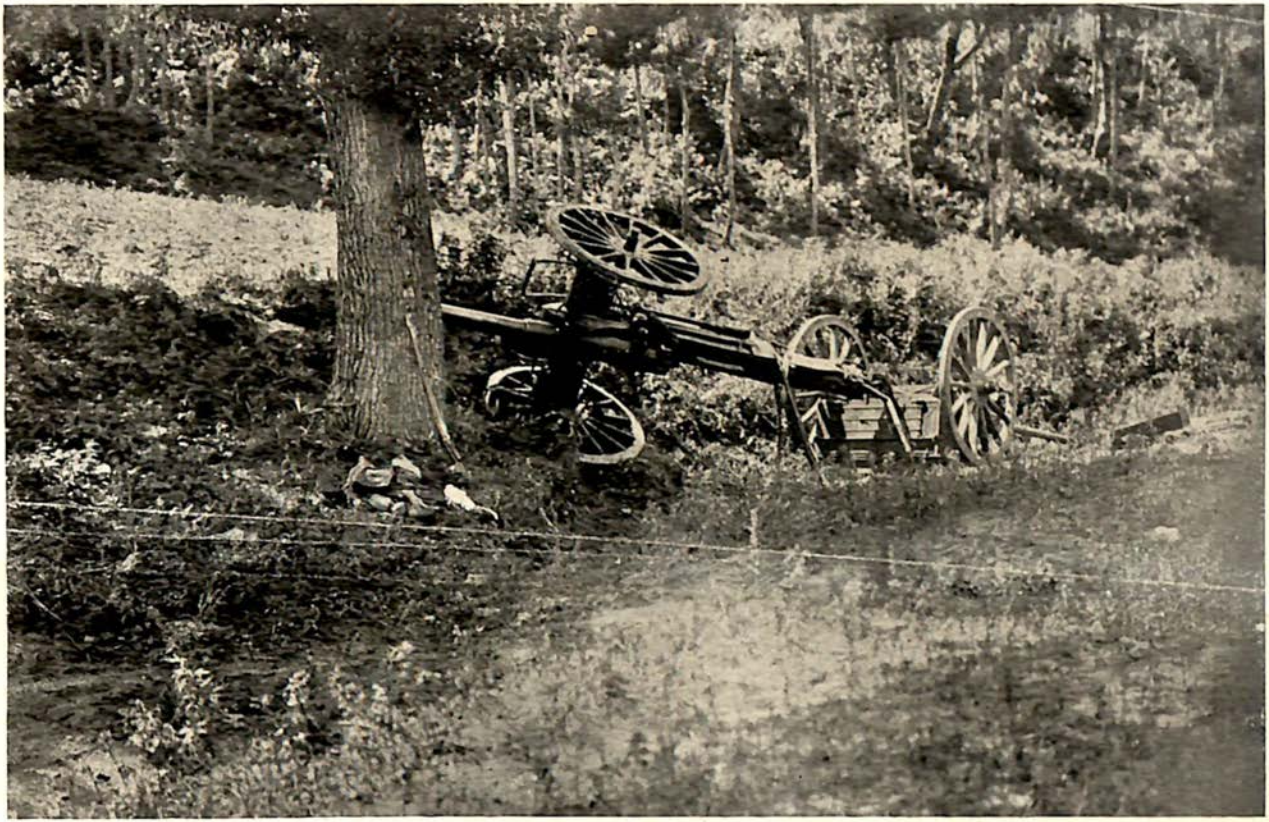
You men of the 2nd Division, to which I am attached, have particularly won my heart. You are nearly as tall as the average European regiment; quite as tall, I should say, as the average French regiment. Your home is in rugged Northern Japan; you are, for the most part, country boys. Your gentleness, your good-humour, your smiles while you march, fan in hand, present a picture almost akin to effeminacy, wholly at odds with that when you are charging up a hill or firing steadily from a trench. Your manners everywhere give war a certain refinement. I have seen a heedless correspondent ride into the formation of a regiment, and stop a whole line of tired men. If he had done it with his own army, blue things would have been

said to him; but you looked at him curiously, as if you were about to poke your fingers into the cage.

You are impersonal to the last degree. In your impersonality lies one of the causes of Japanese efficiency. The Japanese seem to think of himself always as one of many; his squad, his company, his regiment—not himself! That makes team play easy. On the march when ranks are broken, the officers of European armies stand apart. It is bad for discipline not to keep the gulf between rank and line always in evidence. I have often seen the Japanese officer sitting among his men by the roadside and chatting with them; but always he is the officer, and so clear is the definition of feudalism still that they do not think of presuming.

You like to fight as squads, companies and regiments, just as well as some white men whom I know like to fight individually. One common weakness you have with every soldier of the world is homesickness. When I have talked with you as best I could through an interpreter, you have expressed your unhappiness over a delay in camp in a strange land to which you had come purely for the purpose of fighting. I heard you express the same sentiments that a Kansas man did one morning in the Philippines, when his regiment lay in line waiting for the order to charge.

"Come out, Aguinaldo, and bring all your men and all your rifles," he said. "Kansas is ready to fight you to a finish. A lot of us will be killed;



THE GUN OF THE WOODED HILL BATTERY THAT WAS UPSET IN FLIGHT

but the rest will start back for the little old United States, any way."

Of course, there was no element of fatalism in the remark made by a white man, or in the frequent announcement of a British regular going into a fight that everybody has to die some time, and maybe it will be his turn to-day.

Like every other soldier, you make your new land as much like home as you can. You make little landscape gardens in Chinese yards; you build paths out to the road. You paste rice paper that you buy at the canteen—oh, that glorious canteen that has delicacies from Nippon!—upon the walls of your rooms in a Chinese peasant's house. You put a mat on the floor, after washing it, and you always take off your boots when you go in. If you have not a house, you snuggle under a shelter tent that you carry in sections on your back—and take off your boots just the same. Oh, the joy of taking off your boots! They are the hardest of all the samurai equipment to bear.

We have travelled far together, Nippon Denji, first over Korean roads and then over Manchurian roads. You are as much a stranger in this land as I, though you can make ideographs on the sand which Korean or Chinese will understand. Home-sick you may become; it will not make you less martial. It is a tribute to you that you do get home-sick. One of these days, if you survive, you will return, a village hero, to the clean mats of your

own house. According to popular chronicle, your mother will be sorry that you did not die for your Emperor. The truth is that she is human, and she will be heavenly happy; but either way she would smile.

CHAPTER XX

LIAOYANG—FIGHTING OUR WAY INTO POSITION

FOR five months the First Army had not seen the sea, a plain, or a railroad train. When we fought, it was over hills and ridges; when we camped, it was in twisting valleys. On August 24th, we were still at Tiensuiten, which is twenty miles from Liaoyang. Before we might fight in the great battle, we must fight two battles of our own. Before Kuroki could swing into line with Oku and Nodzu, and the three converging columns should form an intact force, we must take a chain of majestic heights on either side of the armpit-deep Tang River.

In that advance, the 2nd Division—the men of Sendai and Northern Japan—formed the centre, the Imperial Guards our left, and the Twelfth our right. On the night of the 25th, when, a week's rations in my saddle-bag, I spread my blanket under a tree, the 30th Regiment was resting on a road near by. I knew the 30th of old. Its commander, Colonel Baba, stepped out of a twelfth-century Japanese screen into a modern uniform.

Two of his companies repulsed the first Russian approach on Motien Pass, and then pursued twice their numbers. Again, on July 30th, one of his lieutenants, scouting a hill-top, came back yelling in boyish glee, "Slip your packs and hurry up! The whole Russian army is in the valley on the other side."

The Sendai men wanted nothing better than that. They did hurry—like mad. Gasping from their climb, they snuggled down to work with their rifles. Vainly the Russians deployed and three times vainly charged. When the Sendai men came to count dead and prisoners there were more than 1,000, not to mention the shelter tents and other spoils of a whole regiment. The commander of the battalion of the 30th, which was engaged, doubtless apologized, Japanese fashion, for not getting more.

On the threshold of the first desperate charge—beginning an orgy of danger and of physical and mental strain without precedent—these veterans sat chatting softly and smoking cigarettes. Each had a white band around his arm, a badge to prevent fatal mistakes in a dash on a pass in the dark. And I was lulled to sleep by the murmur of their talk, and awoke with the sound of guns, to learn that their night attack had succeeded.

As ever in the First Army's career, we were in the valley and the Russians were on the hills which we must take. North-east by south-west ran one

long and intact ridge of the height of 1,000 ft. or more. One end of this we had won in the dark; that was the key. My favourite mountain battery, also a famous night-worker, had here burrowed emplacements for its guns on the flank of the Russian trenches. Its ponies and ammunition train were well sheltered in a gully. Part way up the hill-side in dips, where the enemy could not see them, was our infantry getting into position for the attack. Our movement was to sweep to the west and thus wheel upon the whole length of the crest which the Russian infantry held.

On one of the ribs of the ridge which descended to the valley, I could see the smoke of the volleys of a detached Russian trench. The long summit above, with its bowlders clear against the sky-line, had three cones. Now the men who were advancing toward these by single file in three columns were not firing. Each had the cover of some rib that rose above the line of the general slope, and was more or less at an angle with the line of the crest. The man at the head of each column carried a little Japanese flag, and all had their rifles swung at ease. The manner of their advance seemed to say,—

"We're quite used to this now. You'll catch a few of us, we know, but we'll take the hill—and that's what we were sent to do."

They were the men with the ball. Their "interference" was the incessant rifle-fire poured over

their heads by detachments posted at high points. Meanwhile, the little red-centred flags were steadily waved, so that the "interference" should never mistake friend or foe. These flags seemed animate, as as if they were sweating and stumbling and righting themselves again as they picked their way over the rough, steep ground.

The most western column was advancing underneath, and in a line parallel to that of the Russian trench on the rib. The top of this trench was scraped by a sheet of flying lead, which some of my friends of the 30th regiment were weaving from a rib about 1,000 yards away; and that is why the Russians could not take advantage of a mark fairly under the muzzles of their rifles. Some did not even realize their danger in time. When the head of the column swept over the parapet, a dozen figures sprang up as abruptly as so many jacks-in-the-box. The surprise was as sudden as the meeting of two men with umbrellas lowered at a street corner. Only the Russians were not at all embarrassed as to the proper thing to do. Their hands went up at the same time as their heads.

Having cut the car out at the siding, the train went on. Only half-a-dozen Japanese had entered the trench. They left one of their number to guard the prisoners. Then they rejoined the line, which, without seeming curious or interested, passed underneath the trench—according to programme. The

THE MOUNTAIN BATTERY IN ACTION ON AUGUST 26

incident was significant of the mind and the method of the Japanese army.

Five hundred yards from the summit the three columns took their final breathing spell and came together in three groups for the assault, while the little flags fluttered in the bushes that gave them cover. The mountain battery which had been quiet now realized the psychological moment for which it had been prepared by hours of night work. Any shot in line found the target—that is, the main Russian trench. The storming parties had a breathing space, and girded themselves for their final effort. Now they climbed upward as if death were at their heels instead of ahead of them. They did not fire; the "interference" could not without too much risk. The only thing was to reach the top, and, before they could, some must die, as every man of them knew. The flag of the centre column was waved triumphantly on its appointed cone a minute before the other two. Then we saw the figures on the sky-line rushing to any point of vantage where, by sending bullets in pursuit of the flying enemy, they could score losses which should balance their own side of the ledger. The reserves might now go forward safely over the zone which had been fire-swept ten minutes before.

Thus the day's fighting was finished, but not the day's work, nor the day's drudgery, nor the day's misery. The wounded were yet to be brought in, and the dead and the fuel to burn them collected by

weary limbs. The plunging fire of the Russians against the foe, struggling through the rough fields and over rougher, untilled slopes, had cost the division 600 casualties, including the death of a colonel.

Late in the afternoon a deluge of rain washed the blood off the grass. The flood of water turned dry beds into dashing rivulets. The flood of slaughter, also settling toward the valley, passed on by the single hospital tent—already congested at daybreak from the night attack—into the village, whose population was crowded into a few houses in order that the wounded might be crowded into others. Through every doorway you caught a glimpse of prostrate figures and of white bandages with round red spots which made them like wrapped flags of Japan.

Dripping hospital corps men brought in dripping burdens covered with blankets or with the matting in which the rice and horse fodder of the army are transported. When darkness came, the lanterns of the searchers twinkled in and out on the hill-side. Dawn found them still at work collecting stray Russian wounded, who had lain suffering all night in the rain, for a dollar and fifty cents a year and the glory which the Czar's service brings them. In the bushes, in the declivities between the rocks of many square acres, could every fallen man be gathered? How many cries coming faintly from feverishly dry lips, and finally dying into a swoon,

were unanswered? At some future time, when a Chinese peasant stumbles over a set of bones, the world will not be the wiser.

In a room sixteen feet by ten, in which were twenty Chinese, I had slept on a chest about four feet long, and awakened in the night to find my wet feet insisting that my head should take a turn at hanging over the side. In the morning, a mist which thickened at times into rain shrouded hill and valley alike. Mingled with it was the smoke of crematory piles, where layers of bodies were consumed between layers of wet wood. Riding back up the ridge, I passed sixty dead Japanese placed in a row under the dripping trees of a Chinese garden. Burial was to be their lot. There was not time to burn them.

Our division's losses were greater than at the Yalu. By this standard, and by the physical effort expended as well, we should have rested. But we were only beginning. Our halt was due solely to the mist, which would not permit us to fulfil our programme to advance at the break of day. The infantry remained on the slippery hill-sides, where they had raised their slight shelter-tents and placed wet cornstalks on the damp, spongy earth for beds. On the crest of the ridge, while the bodies of the Russians who had fallen in the trenches there yesterday were being buried, the staff stood helplessly looking out on the grey awning that hid the next valley and prolonged for a few hours the life of

more than one fated big soldier of Russia and little soldier of Japan. Quick as General Nishi was to attack by night some critical point with definite features, he hesitated to make a general advance in the fog, which eventually rose as quickly as a drop-curtain.

Instantly we knew not only the scene, but also the plot of the play. The deep cutting revealed at our feet opened into a valley which led westward to the Tangho, with its fertile bottoms. The town of Anping was hidden by the projecting base of a bluff. We knew its location by a pontoon bridge thick with Russian waggons going in the same tell-tale direction. The waggons crossed stolidly. There was no precipitation in the lowering of the tents of the camp on the other side.

That first clear view of our position quickened every pulse at thought of catching a rearguard straddle of a stream. The mist had favoured the Russians. It had made our advance cautious, and given them cover for retreat. Over the ridge, our infantry, breaking their way through the kowliang, made new paths over slopes where probably no army had ever passed before. After them went the mountain battery, sliding and plunging horses jerking the leaders off their feet.

With the bridge as a centre, our division was pressing in on the retreat from one flank and the 12th from the other. We trusted that the 12th was nearer than ourselves. The Russian cavalry was

moving back and forth on our side of the river; the Russian infantry stretched across the mouth of the valley, while far over the hills the infantry and gun-fire of the 12th pressed closer toward the pontoon. An hour before dark remained. As detachments drew off, the line of Russian infantry became thinner. Some cavalry forded the stream, and then some infantry, too, did not wait on the bridge. "We are going to make them scramble for it," everybody thought, "and there will be sharp work down there in a few minutes."

"No, we're not," we knew a moment later, when one flash and seven more in succession spoke from the other side of the river to the left of the bridge. No shrapnel came in reply. The entry of the battery into the game settled it. The rest had no more dramatic interest than the last half of the ninth inning to the victorious "outs."

That night, three correspondents—Mr. Knight, of the London *Morning Post*, Mr. Frazer, of the London *Times*, and myself—followed the division commander the way that the mountain battery went, and this led us into the big valley running west to Anping, and then to the left into another defile, where your horse stumbled over stones when he did not stick in the mud. By eleven o'clock we were settled in a filthy native farmer's house, to which we were welcomed by the weeping of children and the snarling of dogs. We fed our horses, we ate some biscuits, and we slept a little. But how the

house looked outside or inside by daylight I cannot say. We departed before dawn, but not until after the regiment that had built their camp-fires and fallen asleep in the surrounding kowliang. And it was the same regiment that had buried its dead and spent the previous night in the rain.

On the 28th, the God of Battle rewarded us with a parterre box, where we could see the spectacle as a whole and in detail as well. At this point the Tang-ho bends sharply. By Anping it runs for a time due north; a mile from Anping it runs almost due east. From a high peak we looked down upon the bluffs in the stream-enclosed angle which concealed the waiting enemy, with irregular slopes mounting to a high ridge at his back.

Far to the west, on some rocky summit, I could see the glitter of a heliograph sending messages to and from all parts of the Russian line, which must fall back systematically lest some fraction or other find itself surrounded. We did not know then that the heliograph was on the hill of Chusan, which was the centre of the actual frontal defence of Liaoyang itself. We named it "Kuropatkin's eye," and we were glad to be so near to the gentleman himself; so near to a decisive battle.

In the kowliang of the river bottom, on the opposite side from the Russian position, snuggled the Japanese infantry. Welcome was the hot August sun to dry clothes that had been wet for two days—welcome until ten in the morning. By noon it was

hell, and the uniforms were wet again, not from rain or mist, but from perspiration. Over-night, while the infantry marched to its place, the guns had buried themselves in positions on the high ground nearest the river. My favourite mountain battery was set to look after a trench on the opposite bluff. In five minutes it had emptied that trench of a company of infantry.

These big Russians had a good mile to go in the range of shrapnel-fire. They were being kicked upstairs instead of downstairs, which is harder, especially on a hot day. When for a moment the mountain battery left them alone, they would bunch together at one side or the other, where the ascent was easier. Thus they made a good target again, and bang went a shrapnel over their heads, and wearily they spread out again under the commands of their gesticulating officers. Just when they thought that they had passed out of range, a burst of blue smoke, with scattering fragments, hurried them on like the crack of a slave-driver's whip. It was a man chase, nothing more or less, with the gunners standing as easily to their guns as spectators to their glasses. The Russians must have felt like the tender-foot who has to dance to avoid a group of cowboys' playful fusillade about his soles.

On the other bend of the river facing Anping were two companies of infantry which, under the bluff edge, had been subjected to an occasional fire from the field batteries in that direction. The officer

in command of this line must have drunk a half-bottle of vodka and decided that he would do something brave. He swung out his companies in close order and began marching them down the hill, as if he intended to ford the Tang-ho and wipe out our whole division. The commander of the Japanese battery which had this slope in plain view must have felt like a man who hears of a legacy left to him by an unknown relative. By the watch, that line broke in one minute and a half after the first shrapnel invited retreat. Then the blue smoke wreaths pursued the scrambling units according to example. The business of this force was to have punished the Japanese infantry crossing the river all it could, and then to have got away under cover. Possibly the commander was tired of waiting for something desperate and sensational to happen, in order to keep him and his tired soldiers awake.

Other Russian detachments were driven out from their nesting-places, or, from another view-point, they fell back, having held the Japanese on this line as long as the mind behind the heliograph desired. To force a division to deploy over this mountainous country means alone that its advance cannot be more than four or five miles a day. By noon the way seemed fairly safe for the crossing. Forty or fifty men broke from the kowliang in a seeming foot-race, and dashed into the stream just below the village which lay directly opposite to us.

You could see the splashes of few bullets in the

INFANTRY FORDING THE TANG RIVER ON AUGUST 28

water. The forders no more stopped to fire than a picnic party getting in out of a thunderstorm stop to shake their fists at the heavens. Wading up to their armpits, the racers hastened on till they threw themselves down in a dip of the opposite bank. Then they looked up to see if there was anything worth firing at. Another section of a company made a dash in their wake, and another, and so on. At the same time, crossings had been made in the same way at four other points of the river, the furthest point being below Anping. At 1.15 we had no Japanese on the other side; at 1.30 there was a lodgment of five columns, which, in single file, swept transversely over the slopes, while the guns pursued any fleeing targets that appeared, whether mounted or on foot. The paths were steep, the sun was hot, and the lines seemed only to creep.

When we went back to a hill in the rear where division headquarters were, we found General Nishi as usual smoking cigarette after cigarette, with his back to the field. When it was so dark that you could not see the scene of action—as if that mattered to him, which it did, for his wire told him from hour to hour where his units were—the General lighted still one more cigarette and languidly mounted his horse. We, who had come a long way to report, retraced our steps over miry paths across the river to the village, to which we bade good-bye without breakfast before it was light.

We went to a ridge, where, of course, we could look across a great dip in the mountains (which sank to the valley of a stream, of course) toward another ridge. We could see our troops advancing with their accustomed tactics, but we could hear neither rifles nor guns.

An officer told me that he would wave a handkerchief when there was any action, and I went down to a little brook, where I washed my face and boiled some rice, and roasted an egg-plant and an ear of corn. About noon, when the signal came, I departed, and followed a winding valley road, which brought me to a village on still another bend of the Tang-ho. We were told that we should be here for a few days. This was in keeping with all camp talk, which provided, first, for an approach to the main positions at Liaoyang, and then, for the final assault, as two separats actions.

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By this time I had become intensely human and personal. My pack ponies came up, and I had a good breakfast; while I was told that the division headquarters had departed overnight, giving us the slip—as if we minded freedom of movement!—and from over the ridges to the west I heard the pounding of guns in such volume as I had never heard before. It was like the noise of the surf, rising to a roar now and then as a long breaker rolls in.

At last, when I climbed a ridge, I was to see the plain and Liaoyang. The havoc of 500 guns was

BOILING RICE IN RAIN, AFTERNOON, AUGUST 28

outlined as clearly as the battle panorama of a Gettysburg or a Sedan when you climb the stairs after paying your quarter at the door. The great conflict had begun. Faintly, and but faintly, one other experience expresses the feelings of a correspondent of the First Army, and that is, when you are coming into a port after a long voyage, a telegram of vital decision and the change of a new land awaits you.

CHAPTER XXI

THE ARTILLERY DUEL AT LIAOYANG

THE expiring range flings westward a few detached ridges and hills, which are to the vast plain what rocky island outcroppings of a precipitous coast are to the adjacent sea. Between them gleams the steel track that caused the war; that marks the course of the main armies, and is the first premise in all their strategy.

Flowing eastward at right angles to the railway is the Taitse River, which makes a break in the range. The old Peking road runs beside it. On the southern bank is a typical Chinese provincial capital. There the Russians had many store-houses and sidings. The last of the heights forms a barrier of defence to the east and south-east. These things made Liaoyang a battle-ground—these things and a fortress at the terminus of the railway which must still cling to a hope of relief.

As from a promontory you might see a naval battle beneath, so we saw the artillery duel of August 30th and 31st. The town itself waited and

held its breath. The only sign of action there was the military balloon, a yellow ball that rose higher than the old pagoda tower. To the southward you saw the movement of hospital and ammunition trains, and under the shade of groves and farm-houses the waiting units whose aspect said that the army was engaged.

All these were set like pattern-work within a fence of fire presently as safe from wounds and death as a library nook from a driving storm. Further on along the railroad is a camel's hump of rock, Chusan—which we of the 2nd Division had named "Kuropatkin's eye," from the heliograph we had seen there during the fight of the 28th. In a semicircle, of which that was the midway point, and the Taitse River was the diameter, lay the Russian line of defence. The Second Army, which had fought its way along the railroad, was to extend over the plain to the left of the "eye" and enter Liaoyang from that side. Eastward from the "eye" run the hills and detached ridges which merge into the range at right angles. Here in the "corner" among a chaos of heights, the Fourth Army, which had mastered the passes on the road from Takushan, came into position. On its right was the First Army, which had elbowed its way with many flanking movements through the mountains, until at last it saw the plain. Shoulder to shoulder on the day the masters had set, all the

problems each had had to solve became significantly past history.

That old question which we had ever asked in the months of our waiting in camp on our way from the Yalu—"Will Kuropatkin stand at Liaoyang?"—was answered for the trouble of climbing to the top of a ridge by the flashing of 500 guns, like the sparks from wood when a red-hot iron is drawn across it. That scene of armed strength, the most magnificent since the Germans were before Sedan, did not turn my thoughts to Kuropatkin, but to another general, the head of the Russian railroad system. One sweeping glance told you that Prince Hilkoff had "made good" with his single-track railroad.

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It was strange to find the first great battle with modern arms in the suburbs of a Manchurian town, and strange to find here on this day a tribute to a Russian nobleman because he had learned railroading over vast expanses from bureau to locomotive in America; strange, too, and Oriental, that a correspondent attached to the Japanese army should see the operations of the Russian better than those of the Japanese side. For a group of foreigners had taken the place of Kuroki's army. They occupied the right end of the line resting on the Taitse.

On the afternoon of the 29th, the 2nd Division

had swung into position here very demonstratively, and on the night of the 29th it fell back in the quietest kind of way, and, crossing the Taitse to join the 12th in Kuroki's flanking movement, left correspondents and attachés with their mentors to choose a place where they could see the plain for twenty miles round. In this relief map the only reduction to scale was the limits of our field-glasses.

Realizing the object of each movement, we were to have the problems of a battle's tactics worked out before our eyes. The five bridges at the back of the town spoke volumes. Only once during the first day was there a sign of life on any of them. Then a train crossed, and by its smoke as it moved northward we could denote the line of the railroad. Behind a parallel row of hills to the eastward were the camps of the battalions protecting the flank. A schoolboy could have understood instantly how Kuropatkin must go once we drove these battalions back. With the bridges destroyed after his crossing, the Japanese frontal line was momentarily powerless, and Kuroki might have to resist the pressure of the whole Russian army. When the Japanese Second Army, swinging to the left over the level plain to the west of Liaoyang, could force back the Russian right, then the front must fall back to the town; so it must if we secured possession of the "corner."

The gap on our right between the Fourth and the

GUNS OF THE 2ND DIVISION CROSSING TANG RIVER

First Armies offered an opportunity such as Wellington used at Salamanca. If Kuroki could make his threat on the railroad insistent enough, if Oku and Nodzu could shake the Russian defence on the Liaoyang side, then Kuropatkin would be too busy elsewhere to spare the troops to plunge into the opening. Therein lay the "nerve" of Japanese strategy; therein its success. The board and the pieces were before us, and we who sat on the hills as spectators understood the game—aye, and the mighty stake.

When Captain March, the artillery expert of our General Staff, looked on a volume of gun-fire never equalled in the world before, he drew a deep breath and said, "This is great!"

Again he said, "This is great!" and again.

But it was not the words or even the way he spoke them, as much as March's deep breaths, that expressed our feelings. All, soldiers and correspondents alike, had talked by the camp-fires of little campaigns of what a great battle with modern arms would be like—and here was our ambition glutted to satisfaction.

In that "corner" where ridge met spur in the chaos of battling landslide, we could mark the positions of our batteries as you mark the factory portion of a town by its chimneys. Over each one hung the blue curls of the enemy's shrapnel. Deeper than their neighbours spoke our captured Russian guns which were with the Imperial Guards, now the

extreme right of the main line and attached to the Fourth Army.

One Japanese battery was marked as a particular target. I counted twenty puffs over it inside of a minute. We could see the guns that sent them out, and their flashes were ugly orange red, and the puffs, except for the lightning flicker of their bursts, might have been a display of daylight fireworks. For an interval of a few minutes the fire would cease, except for an occasional shot, as if the gunners were keeping their heads in. We would conclude that the Japanese had had the worst of it. Then, as you would flip out the fingers of your hand from the palm, one after another, the air would be sprinkled again with blue curls.

The fact was that the marked battery was doing ugly work among the Russian infantry, as we could see, and whenever it broke out afresh, the Russian guns had to concentrate and drive its gunners back to their casemates. The value of the marked battery to its own side was that it required a far-outnumbering predominance of disciplinary shells, and in such amenities and checks and balances you get the sense of an artillery duel.

No heliograph was being used on the hill of Chusan on that day, you may be sure. It was an island in a fog of shrapnel smoke. Along the spurs and as far past it as we could see, there ran literally a line of fire. In the dip between the "eye" and the spur the Russian guns were two tiers deep.

AN OUTPOST WAITING AND WATCHING

There we saw the game with weapons that hurled sixteen pounds of steel jacket, enclosing two hundred odd bullets, played in much the same way that boys wage battle between snow forts. The trick is to fire when the other side is exposed, and to keep down when the other side replies. Every Russian battery, except those lost in the haze beyond the "eye," was visible; but we could not see a single flash from a Japanese gun. We could see only the results of the Japanese fire, while the results of the Russian fire we could determine in the "corner" alone.

In your ears always was a roar which, at times, was as thick as that of a cataract. If there were intervals free of any report, it brought you the speech of infantry so continuous that it purred like a rubber tire over a freshly macadamized road. This reminded you again that the guns were only the brasses and the drums of this international orchestra. On the last of the hills beyond the Russian batteries lay the Russian soldiery, and still beyond them, in front of the Japanese guns, the Japanese.

What charges were being made, and what charges were failing, we could not tell. We only knew that any successful advance must send back the Russian guns. The infantry of the Fourth Army, we knew, were moving forward. We heard the cheers of a position taken, but saw not one of the Japanese soldiers who had taken it. Then we saw the Russians going over the ridge in a counter-charge, and we

heard their cheers when they recovered what they had lost. Like every other part of the Russian line, they were put in position to resist to the death. They had been surprised, but they had kept the faith with the counter-charge.

These cheers called the spectator. I wanted to be nearer to the infantry line and to feel the pulse of that arm which is the bone and sinew of battle. But I knew, too, that I should miss that whole which had the fascination of a fortune at hazard on a throw. At any moment the line might break, and the confusion of many regiments and many guns would be under our eye. We watched its length feverishly for the first sign of weakness.

Facing the heights on which we sat were the Russians awaiting the attack on our right. The battery on the ridge directly between us and the town had us in easy range. One of the attachés chivalrously reasoned that its commander recognized through his telescope that we were only sightseers. More likely, having in mind the attachés and correspondents on the Russian side, he was not likely to waste his ammunition doing his enemy a favour. Between the base of the hills and the Taitse-ho another battery was stretched across the intervening levels.

Two idle batteries, then, at least, waited all day while the division that threatened them was miles away. This gap was protected by only the thinnest screen of Japanese cavalry. All the transportation

of the First Army, its ammunition, its flank, its rear, lay exposed to vigorous assault by horse or foot.

Early in the war, the essays of the Russian cavalry had been met by infantry of the First Army catching them in the valley with a plunging fire. Now we had not even a few companies on the hills that looked down on the Taitse-ho and the Tang-ho. As we made the feint of a division serve as another division, so we made the Japanese infantry's reputation protect our line of communication. And the Russian gunners lay in the shade, and the Russian infantry looked over the near ridges for our coming. I wondered that Sheridan and Stuart did not turn in their graves.

Toward noon of the 30th, the clear sky of the early morning became overcast. Clouds hung above the smoky mist of the shrapnel. Nature was in no mood for rain; but the thunders of the guns literally shook it out of the heavens. The gusts of moisture came down angrily and niggardly. They were thickest where the fire was thickest. But none of the guns of either side stopped. As night came on, the flashes of the muzzles and of the shrapnel bursts put points of flame in a lowering mantle of darkness. When I fell asleep, I still heard some firing. It was the gunners' blind effort to dismay the infantry which lay grimly waiting on one side and grimly ambitious on the other.

The morning of the 31st was as fair as that of

the 30th. Silver streak of stream, and dust streak of road, and line of shrapnel smoke and gun-flashes, disappeared into the haze of an August day fit for the ripening of kowliang and corn. Liaoyang lay still, a patch of silence on the plain. Its five bridges, including that of the railroad, were still undotted spans across the stream. The white and drab houses of the native city merged with the green of their gardens. The military balloon was making its first morning ascension. Inside of the fence of fire the units of the army's rear seemed in the same position as yesterday. There was no lull in the thunders which had begun at daybreak. The last twenty-four hours seemed like a month. This artillery duel had become an institution.

But, yes, a closer look showed a change—a little change. The bursts of the Japanese shrapnel were now carried far to the other side of "Kuropatkin's eye" toward the town, and they played continuously over a Russian battery in a position further to the rear than any held before. By hand the men of Oku's army had dragged all the way from Nanshan, where they were captured, these five-inch Canets whose bite was worthy of their bark. The artillerists, who had struggled with them over bad roads, had their reward. Now, for the first time in this war, except at Port Arthur, the gunners of the victorious Japanese could stand out of range of the Russian guns which were their targets. There is no joy sweeter to an artillerist's heart than that.

Then, too, in that "corner" of congested hills and congested artillery fire, it was evident that some of the Russian guns had fallen back a little; but that might have been only to rectify the line.

The infantry supporting the battery on the ridges directly opposite the correspondents' citadel of observation, tramped heavily, Russian fashion, into the gully and up on to the ridge near us, and looked over the top of that, and stopped there for a time. Past the battery on the bank of the Taitse-ho four guns trotted out leisurely in reconnoissance behind infantry and cavalry that had gone ahead. They were fairly in line with the rear of the Fourth Army. After a few shots in our direction, which met with no response, they went back, and so did the infantry on the ridges in front of the correspondents, without even sending us to cover with a volley or two; we felt most insignificant and unworthy.

Now, Kuropatkin in his report tells us that his plan was to let Kuroki isolate his army, and then destroy it in detail. On the morning of the 31st, he says, he learned—presumably from this reconnoissance—of the broad gap in our lines; but he was being crowded so hard in other directions that he had no troops to spare for the opportunity. The daring of Japanese strategy had taken the nature of its enemy into account, and had reckoned well. By his own confession, Kuropatkin had not discovered the gap until thirty-six hours after it existed. A half-dozen good American or South

African scouts would have informed him soon after sunrise on the 29th, and these men would have been worth more to the Russians than any half-dozen of their colonels.

When I first looked out on the plain and saw the two armies engaged, I was of the mind to see an epochal contest decided in a day or two, as Waterloo or Antietam were. The ammunition expended in a forenoon was more than that expended in the whole battle of Gettysburg. Long-range weapons and railways mean only that the railways have more to carry, and by sparring with guns and rifles while the infantry creeps forward, the openings for critical assaults develop themselves but slowly and grudgingly. Five hundred guns in line, with the shrapnel of as many breaking over them, doubtless presents the most stupendous spectacle ever brought into the vista of the human eye. Yet the most magnificent storm at sea would scarcely keep the most ardent admirer of nature's wonders from losing his sleep.

Field-glasses that had scarcely left their owners' eyes on the 30th now had long intervals of rest. We were in the presence of a gigantic tug of war, where the two teams seemed to hold each other steady, with never a flutter of the ribbon to one side or the other. The effect of that vast play of force hypnotically kept us in our places. To go nearer was to see only one of a thousand parts that

PONTOONS USED ON THE YALU PASSING ARTILLERY CAMP NEAR WIJU

I had already seen; that I was to see on the morrow; and so I remained.

March, the gunner, who yesterday had munched his hard-tack while he gazed, now told us that the sun was much hotter to-day than yesterday—though it was not. The very suspense was wearing the observer out. We felt at times as if we were listening to a ship grinding her way through the ice, with the expectation that she would succumb at any moment. If Blondin had stood for hours on the tight-rope over Niagara Falls, I can well understand how the spectator, at first spell-bound, might turn aside to play with a dog at his feet; or he might even go home for luncheon, expecting that Blondin would still be there when he returned.

"Tell me if anything new happens," said March, as he sought the shade for his luncheon. "It's only guns going off, anyway."

What March wanted, what we all wanted, was bulletins. It is not the fireworks nor the shouting, but the figures appearing on the transparencies which hold stern attention on an election night. We must watch results reveal themselves, certain that any vital change would be as clear to us as anger, mirth, or death in pantomime on the stage. And little things—little in this great affair—began to speak of tendencies, at least.

Beyond the river, to the north, we saw the breaking of Russian shells on the hills, which told us

that Kuroki had made his lodgment on the flank, although he did not yet threaten the railroad. Far out on the plain to the west of the town we saw the fires which told of unexpected pressure there, and the destruction by the Russians of any possible cover for the advance of the Japanese left. In that direction, too, we saw the movement of Russian reinforcing columns. Nearer, on the sidings just beyond the Russian quarter, the smoke of a dozen locomotives spoke of departure for the wounded, and, if necessary, for the vital ammunition which should maim more. Liaoyang itself still waited and watched on another lease of power for the old master, or the entry of the new. The bridges still unoccupied only meant that the way was clear when the time came to go.

There was no diminution in the volume of artillery fire. A second time, almost at the same hour, the sky, grown ugly purple, shed reluctantly the moisture which the sun had extracted from earth and stream. The drops hissing on hot barrels were at the same time cooling to the intent faces of the fighters. The flashes were plainer, while the blue curls of the smoke of the shrapnel merged with the mist. A second time, the sky having yielded its all, the atmosphere cleared, as vari-coloured shadows passed over the sea of yellowing corn.

The Japanese shells had crept still further past "Kuropatkin's eye." In the "corner" there was no question but the Russian infantry had fallen

back, for the Russian guns were shifting their position to the rear. But between the last of the hills and the town, all obscured by the high kowliang, were the redoubts, the pits with stakes at their bottoms, and the barbed-wire entanglements of the last line which was still to be taken by assault or commanded in flank.

When, with the gathering of darkness, I left the scene, my last glimpse was of a battery between the "eye" and a neighbouring spur. It was under a veil of shrapnel smoke, illuminated by lightnings, which quickly, stitch by stitch, the Japanese had woven.

"Can they stand that and fire again?" you asked. Beneath the mantle of smoke, like diamonds on a bride's head, the Russian gunners, who had kept cover during the fusillade, flashed their response as rapid as the sparks of a match struck on the wall. Yet the bursts significantly outnumbered the flashes. Something said that the battery would not be there at daybreak.

The Japanese infantry had found the points in the wall of human flesh and smokeless powder that were weak. They had crowded so close that retreat was death, and advance their only salvation. That night they broke through with the bayonet.

CHAPTER XXII

LIAOYANG—KUROKI CROSSES THE TAITSE

WE had seen the battle and the field of operations as a whole. Now we were to see and feel a part—the intimate, trying part—when veterans used to victories, locking arms with superior numbers, should make the effort of two divisions the universe of our hopes and fears for three days of blood and heat.

On the night of August 31st, I rode on in the track of the flanking force, which had crossed the unfordable Taitse in face of a napping enemy. This was a by-road between high hills, where, in the darkness, the torches and camp-fires of the commissariat lighted the maze of Japanese carts, Chinese carts, pack ponies, Korean and Chinese coolies, and all the plodding flesh, human or animal, which could bear or draw supplies.

Among the caravan, as I rode forward, I made out indistinctly the form of a tent which I knew as well as I knew my own pony. The "boys" had put it up on a stubble field. We had for dinner a delicacy that we had been saving for two months

with a view to such a time as this, when long anticipation is realized with the keen appetite of sheer physical fatigue. As I write I can taste that can of peaches.

In the morning it was only an hour's trot to the river. There I met old friends in an unexpected place—the pontoons that we had used at the Yalu. They had not come with Nishi from Feng-Wang-Cheng along the old Peking road; so they must have gone by mountain paths and over mountain passes with the 12th, which, without ever closing up with the frontal force, had gone directly to a lodgment on the stream which covered Kuropatkin's left.

Luck is with these pontoons. Thus far they have caused the dismissal of two Russian generals; and well may the little engineers bale them out and repaint them in the hope of favours to come on other streams that lie on the way to Harbin. At the Yalu, Zassulitch concluded that the Japanese were going to cross at Antung, and awakened to find the bridge of his disgrace spanning an unprotected flank. Orloff evidently laboured under the same fulness of theory and lack of scouting practice. His wound at Yentai did not save him from public humiliation by his Emperor.

Till we crossed the Taitse, the war for the First Army had been the march of a pattern plan: Whatever the casualties, when night had fallen the day's work had been finished according to pro-

gramme. This masterly trick with the pontoons, the nerve that had left a gap of five miles in an army's line and thrown a wing into the air, was the climax of our strategy here. Beyond the Taitse the conflict became such as painters paint and writers write. On a level three miles across and ten miles from east to west, parallel with the railroad, the 2nd Division had its position. Its right end was in touch with the 12th; Inouye's 12th that had marched from Seoul, that had been first at Ping-Yang, first at the Yalu, first at Feng-Wang-Cheng, and now was the exposed end of an army of one hundred and fifty thousand men. The Imperial Guards were separated from their corps and fighting with the Fourth Army in the frontal attack. Once the Russian first line was taken, they would close into the gap between the main body and the wing, and again be in touch with the left of the Second Army.

The task before us, to the eye comprehending only field and slope, was such as more than once before had occupied us for only a few hours' time. To the left was an irregular mountain, called No. 131 on the map, which, rising knuckle-like, formed a rampart buttressing the defence of Liaoyang from the north-east. Across a narrow gap from its base there is a "little hill," Hayentai, not more than two hundred feet high at its highest point and scarcely four hundred yards long, but to many soldiers of both armies bigger than Mont Blanc.

Across another level of a mile or more were two series of ridges, which the spectators called Four Finger and Five Finger. Their Chinese names, which I have since learned, mean nothing to me. I stick to those by which we knew them through three days, when every burst of rifle-fire and every salvo of shrapnel brought us some message of how the hazard was going. Through the gaps between the heights we could see the villages on the line of the railway which was our goal.

The "little hill" the Russians had not properly fortified. It was quite neglected until the battle began. Elsewhere, but not here, the Russians had cut the kowliang over the approaches to their defences.

Hayentai was bare. It was a target. It must be taken. It was hard to take and hard to hold. To an approaching army, the kowliang meant what darkness does to a torpedo attack. Two weeks later, when the kowliang was shocked, you might sit on the temple-steps in the village at the base of the hill and see a man three miles away as he walked across the plain. On September 1st he might have crept up to within fifty yards and had the "drop" on you before you had a glimpse of him.

To little men with mobile nether limbs and the cunning of the fox, the kowliang speaks a sympathetic language. There were also patches of low millet, such as we see at home; but the army

was especially solicitous in avoiding them. Hereafter, the Chinese may plant that kind, for it has a good joss and is not trampled down in war time. The Russians on the "little hill" were in the position of a blind man shooting down the street. They knew that the Japanese were coming, but they did not know just where. They shot into the kowliang miscellaneously, and a thick mass of stalks measurably shortened the range of their bullets.

In one of our recent naval manœuvres at home, a black turret bounced porpoise-like out of the water near a battleship, and a saucy ensign signalled: "I have torpedoed you." General Orloff could sympathize with the captain of that battleship. The morning of September 1st revealed the thirty-six guns of the 2nd Division in a set, close line within 4,000 yards range of the "little hill." The gunners had worked all night, as they had for the last five nights; and they were to fight all day, as they had for the last five days: Only by working all night would they have the opportunity to fight all day. The inferior range makes it necessary that they bring their guns close to the enemy. Here was not the first time they had so taken advantage of position as to force any Russian gun which could reach them by direct fire to come within range.

Now we were fighting on the plain; now we were having a new experience and new methods. This I

realized rather pathetically when a Chinese coolie at the rear of the regiment, which I followed across the pontoon, was singled out by the nature of his burden. He had a characterless armful of red and white cloth and wood. I recognized the little flags which, on many stubborn hill-sides, had marked the progress of the storming party. They were made out of common cotton, and their staffs were the sticks to hand at the time. These souvenirs of reality had no touch of the gallery play of the silken regimental standard which is blessed with the tears and prayers of thousands at home; they had simply the clinging fondness of personal association.

Like an old coat, they were half doubtfully brought along. If the advance squads waved them now, they were quite as likely to be seen by the Russian as the Japanese general. The sudden change of our world of action from mountains to level made them as useless as a mosquito-net in mid-ocean. The generals must henceforth keep touch with their commands by wire and messenger; the units must keep touch, one with the other, by feeling rather than by sight—by the genius of military homogeneity.

Yes, we must do that; and we must get the "little hill," that wart on the nose of our landscape. Once it was ours, we had the leverage to move by flank upon the heights to the right and left.

Confidently the regiments, the battalions, the

companies, deployed into the kowliang; as confidently as if no mere storm of bullets could make a veteran army break an engagement to cut off Kuropatkin's retreat. If some magic reaper could have suddenly laid the kowliang low, a feast of targets would have been offered to the Russian gunners' eyes. But all that was visible was the sea of ripening tassels stretching across the breadth of the plain to heights that screened the pontoon. The Russian gunners knew that there was cannon food here, and they cast their shells on a hundred-to-one chance. From high ground, watching the shrapnel being thrown over the field, we could tell when they were hot and when they were cold. As a miller will weep over burning grain, so an artillerist might well weep at that pitiful waste of shell-fire.

The Russian battery commander stays in his battery, his sight obscured by the smoke and dust; his perspective affected by the action immediately around him. This is one of the Russian prejudices. Every army has its prejudices, the product of national mind and habit, which are against the best approved thought of its own specialists, who are helpless to overcome them. The Japanese, conning the text-books of the world, finding all modern progress new, are without prejudices; and the text-book way for a battery commander, though he does not seem so gallant for picture purposes, and risks his life even more, is to stand at one side

of the battery, where he can keep his eye out for the target and for the effects of his shells. Thus, really he centres his mind on the game and plays his gun as a winning pitcher plays his curves in baseball.

For two days I watched a Japanese battalion which lay in close order behind a slight rise. Half a dozen times the Russian guns seemed to have found it, and curls of smoke broke at the right angle of height and distance. There were flutters in the mass of khaki, like that of the kowliang in a breeze; the movement to assist the wounded. But the battalion gave no such corroboration of Russian suspicion of its presence as to deploy. It was needed where it was; there was no better cover to be had. Stoically it held on. Directly the Russian, all oblivious of his fortune, turned the stream elsewhere, evidently determined to wet all the ground impartially.

But the Russians did not overlook our batteries. These were pounded steadily. If Russian practice had been good, they would have been silenced. As it was, their answer to the poor indirect fire which they could not reach was a killing, direct fire that poured shrapnel into the village at the base of Hayentai and dug holes in its slope with common shell. If a Russian gun had tried to swing into position on the crest of the "little hill," it would literally have been blown off. The "little hill" was no place for guns. It was no place even for infantry

SHRAPNEL BURSTS OVER INFANTRY AT LIAOYANG

to tarry long after taking it by storm, as later events proved. We caught glimpses of Russian infantry there early in the fight, but to remain was simply to set themselves up for slaughter.

Their departure did not mean that the hill was ours. Left and right they could bring fire on any force that tried to storm it. Rush by rush, however, our troops made their way through the kowliang. At nightfall we were in the village at the base of Hayentai. As the sun went down, our shells were still bursting on the crest, and the Russian shells were bursting over our guns and over the field at random. From the direction of Liaoyang we had heard no sound of firing all day. The tired Russians there were settling themselves in their second line of defence, and the Japanese bringing forward their artillery so that it should command the town. When I fell asleep from sheer exhaustion Hayentai was outlined by flashes of rifle-fire. In the pale moonlight, the Japanese crept out of the little village, and, foot by foot, in face of the flashes, with bayonet in hand, in overwhelming numbers at 2 a.m. they swept over the crest and bore the enemy back.

Yet there was no rest for them. They had to make their squatters' rights good; to improve their holdings instantly. More Russian guns and more Russian infantry had come up over-night. As the Russian line before Liaoyang contracted, it yielded spare divisions for the protection of the flank. With the first streaks of dawn a mist of shrapnel smoke

hung over the "little hill." The work of the spade in the blue, moist earth came after the work of the bayonet in the flesh. Like prairie dogs, the little men, who were to hold Hayentai for the long day before them, burrowed for their lives. While a few on the crest watched from cover there, the others dug deeper in their holes with the scream of shrapnel in their ears. If the infantry of the enemy came, then the enemy's guns must abate their fire as the charge approached, and the bomb-proofs would empty their guests over the crest to meet the onslaught. For the value of the "little hill" was not "in firing from it, but in having the other fellow off it."

CHAPTER XXIII

AN IMPORTANT "LITTLE HILL"

A SECOND bridge was built later in a more convenient place, saving the transport carts a mile or more. The lodgment for the pontoons was made in the dip between two heights. That to the north, Kwantun, was once crowned by a fortress or a castle of some kind, built, possibly, before the Coliseum. The thick, crumbling wall of massive stones, thirty feet high in places, still remains. In this modern battle the only part that Kwantun played was to furnish shade to the staff, the attachés, and the correspondents. Here General Kuroki could see the whole length of the positions which his forces were assailing.

On the reverse side of the slope the telegraphers and the field telephone men were always busy bringing news from our divisions, our brigades, our regiments, our batteries, and, most important of all, from Oyama. Upon the span of wire through the cornfields depended the staff knowledge of the position of our own corps and all the work of other corps which affected our own. When the key

should sound for Grand Headquarters and no answer come, the position would be that of a battleship in evolution whose rudder had refused to respond. If the telegraph commands a mobility of organization on a large scale impossible in Napoleon's time, no chief of staff can ever quite forget that the execution of his plans hangs by a thin thread of copper.

No crime in the eyes of justice in battle equals that of cutting a wire. The penalty is instant death in all armies. We had an illustration of this on the 1st. Collins was a little distance behind the staff when he saw one of the telegraph men running after a Chinese, who squealed in terror as he fled. The telegraph man caught the culprit by the pigtail and brought him to his knees. With a fatalism that accepted the inevitable, the Chinese seemed to lower his head for the process. With the Japanese sword that he carried, the telegraph man severed it from the body. There was damning evidence enough, a pair of wire-cutters and bits of Japanese wire found on the person. "Rather abrupt," you may say. But cutting a wire may change the fate of a battle or mean the loss of thousands of lives.

The staff did not seem to work hard. When it does, we shall be worried about the fate of our corps. General Kuroki spent most of his time in the shade. When the Japanese raise a statue to him, I hope that he will not be riding a prancing horse and swinging his sword; for he never rode a

FIELD TELEPHONE BURIED TO PROTECT IT FROM FIRE

prancing horse, and never used his sword. To my recollection, I never saw him make any gesture except to salute. The sculptor had best make him squatting and looking at a map while he listens to his staff; and always all of his staff except the younger men (the gallopers) were at his side. He could call for information or suggestions as quickly as the head of a great business house who has a row of push buttons on his desk.

General Fuji, the chief, went to sleep in the thick of the fight on the 2nd. He had worked most of the night, planning for that day. He could not make the work of our infantry any easier, or make the fire of our guns any more accurate by watching them. He could hear much better than he could see, getting over the wire every detail of the movement of each regiment and battalion as each general, and colonel, and major saw it. When he was wanted he could be wakened. Until he was, according to the scientific view, he served his country best by resting.

If you descended the slope into that field of kowliang which hid our soldiers, you found yourself in the situation of a botanist who is studying a single flower instead of one who observes a landscape. You found blood and men and ripening grain. The wounded were in the farmhouses; the dead were being burned by weary details. Doctors, with their eyelids drooping, were almost too tired to be polite. The heat was the steady heat of that

season when the milk of the corn is turning to flour. The rows between the kowliang were like the closed cabin of a cat-boat which rests on a glassy surface in a midday sun. Overhead, the tassels now and then would move a little with a milky warm, but relatively cool, breeze, as tantalizingly out of reach as heaven itself. To lift your head was to be taught humility by the bullets.

As the line crept forward, there were only stalks ahead of it and stalks behind it, and the guide of its advance was the enemy's fire. The guns roared like thunder. An infantryman could count the reports from friendly mouths as an offset to the shrapnel bursts that clipped through the kowliang like hail. Details went and came with water, water, water—a Chinese well, a ditch, anything that was wet. Sanitary regulations passed into limbo in the supreme hour of a great battle. The sufferers must drink, and a canteen full seemed only a swallow. If I appear to indulge in figures of speech, then I ask you to take three days to crawl three miles through a Kansas cornfield in August, being shot at all the time. When you have done that on eight sen a day, probably you will think that the land conquered belongs to you, regardless of title-deeds.

On the night of the 1st, Collins and I had slept on some cornstalks on the slope occupied by the staff during the day. We awoke when the flashes of Russian shrapnel began playing over the patriotic heads of the little men who had taken Hayentai from

the big men overnight. Drowsily we rolled up our blankets, with the comprehension, first, that we had horses to feed, then, that the artillery fire was going on to-day as it had yesterday, and then that we were hungry, with no breakfast in sight. Probably the artillery fire would go on for ever; probably there were no soft beds and no square meals anywhere in the world since we had returned to chaotic beginnings. We recalled, however, that a river flowed not far away on this summer morning. Presently, there was no war; there were only two insanely happy men bathing themselves and their horses. As we dressed Collins broke into speech,—

"What I would like," he said, "would be, first, some grapes all dewy off the ice; then—"

But I did not permit him to go any further.

We had a little rice and some coffee. He boiled the rice and I made the coffee, and I assure you we did not overtax our stomachs.

"And after I had topped off with ice cream," said Collins, reminiscently, "I think I'd go to sleep, with orders not to wake me, ever."

We had something that tasted as well to us as ice cream to the average diner in town. You may trust soldiers to find a spring, if there is one. In the kowliang, not far from Kwantun, a spring bubbled out of the ploughed earth; bubbled ceaselessly, coolly, from the filter of sandy loam, laughing typhoid to scorn. When I first looked at it I remember wondering how such cool water could

come out of a cornfield on such a hot day. If a linen cloth and spotless napkins and Collins' idea of a breakfast had materialized at my elbow on opening my eyes after a night on the ground, I could not have been much happier than I was to have my turn among the "transporters" at this fountain of joy. You found bottom in the region of your ankles, and you felt each swallow trickle down till you were full to the throat. If such springs had been plentiful in the kowliang, we might have surrounded the Russians.

There had been no rest for most of our gunners. They had reached a situation where the general might say, "Battery Number 2 may get the best cover it can from shrapnel and sleep for an hour." Our guns had become used to moving over-night. Most of them were now in a new position to the right of Hayentai, where they were in range of the Russian positions of yesterday, at all events. The possession of Hayentai gave us no place for guns or infantry; but it meant, I repeat, that we could swing into the gap to the north-east of Hayentai, and get a purchase in flank on Four Finger and Five Finger. This we were doing. Optimism ran high for the moment, among the spectators, at least. They had been so accustomed to seeing any Japanese programme carried out that many thought that we were going to cut the railroad and get behind Kuropatkin. In the first place, we do not know that Kuroki ever had any programme of the

sort; in the second place, there was the remark that March had made on the 30th, when we realized the magnitude of the Russian forces,—

"Two or three divisions (with a river separating them from their main body) will not stay long behind an army of twelve or fifteen divisions which want to break through in retreat."

We knew then, as well as we knew six days later, that Kuropatkin, if he were not a gigantic blunderer, could make his retreat good when he was ready. The stake for which we might hope was the capture or the annihilation of a division or less of the rearguard.

The first of the rambling ridges of Four Finger and Five Finger were already ours. The 12th had passed out of the kowliang on to the slopes. Plainer than the men, we could see the ammunition ponies emerge from the fields like serpents from the sea, and go into the cover of gullies. The first main ridge had been taken with a rush. Our advance had passed on over the crest, while our reserves were khaki patches on the rocks. Between two of the fingers we could see a saddle-like plateau between heights beyond. On this were two most persistent Russian guns, which were pounding our infantry whenever the shrapnel from the 12th gave them a clear air for seeing. Half a dozen times I thought that at last the two had given up, and flash—flash, their muzzles would signify their presence. Bang—bang—bang, the

reply of the Japanese seemed in words: "Oh, you're still there, are you? Very well. Here's another present!" And the Russians would be quiet for three or four minutes, as if trying to divert suspicion before they spoke again.

At noon there was no longer any doubt; the two guns had gone. Now the 12th began its assault. To its assistance had come the Osaka mixed brigade, fresh from Japan. Though the Russian guns were away, the Russian infantry apparently still held the "saddle." Our guns, swinging out into the gap, directed their fire to the protection of our advance. Thus far, indeed, we were going well. It was said when we possessed the "saddle" on Four Finger our guns would be in range of the railway. But later the spectators learned that they had mistaken a new branch running to the coal-mines of Yentai, not on our maps, for the main line.

As for Hayentai, the Russians had many more guns in that direction than yesterday. We judged that some might have been brought off, as the line before Liaoyang narrowed with its retreat. The Russian batteries realized that the Japanese were not on the crest of the "little hill," and throughout the day they dropped shells on the slopes where our infantry burrowed, and also in the village below. A dozen would burst in rapid succession; always there were enough to keep the new masters from cooking their rice or sending details for anything but water. Hayentai was the rock splitting the

A JAPANESE BATTERY IN ACTION IN THE KOWLIANG

stream of our advance. We had to go around it. Through the kowliang to the south-west our infantry swept toward the mountainous height (known on the map as No. 131) which commanded Liaoyang from the north-east. If the 12th were swung in toward Liaoyang, then it seemed that No. 131 must fall of its own weight. Once ours, with the ridges behind it also ours, we had a commanding gun position for striking the retreat.

The staff evidently wanted No. 131 immediately, as well as Four Finger and Five Finger. The Imperial Guards, which was the 3rd Division in Kuroki's army, were still on the other side of the Taitse-ho. They were sent forward in demonstration on the river bottom toward No. 131; and on the river bottom they lay for hours. The gravel under their bodies was as hot as a stove lid. The shrapnel scattered it as the first raindrops do the dust of the road. But the Guards were too tired to mind that. They felt as if they had been fighting and marching since the world began; and they fell asleep, despite death and heat.

Meanwhile, the real charge broke out of the kowliang to the south-east of the little hill. It ran around the base of a slope, and, dodging and dashing by rushes, swept upward, with dead and wounded in its track. If the Russians in the trench above had retreated often, they must have had some satisfaction. They came out of their cover, and, silhouetting themselves against the sky, fired at will,

patronizingly. Our men took what cover they could and rested. From that side, at least, we did not take No. 131 on the afternoon of the 2nd.

Darkness fell, with the Russians still in possession of No. 131 and the Guards still lying on the bed of the stream. We observers with the First Army could see only the work of our corps. Liaoyang was hidden from us. But gun-fire in that direction told of action there. At one time we heard that the Russians were already away; again, that the town was ours whenever we would take it. There was no question that in front of the First the enemy was reinforcing rapidly with guns and men.

The officer who had lost Hayentai on the night of the 1st had, doubtless, told his superior that he could hold the "little hill" against any odds. For you can place only a certain number of men within a given length of trench, and he had ample forces. He was right in theory, but wrong in practice against the Japanese. Liaoyang brought a new feature into modern warfare—the night attack. The Russian officer in command of the "little hill" could not help himself. He was in the position of the resident of Johnstown who was correct in thinking that his drainage system was all right until the flood came.

When the bloody remnant of his force examined itself in the daylight in the kowliang, where it had groped for cover, its members might well have subscribed to the popular impression in Russia that the Japanese is a poisonous insect that crawls into the

soldier's boots and under his clothing and stings him to death. One thing we have noted, stage by stage from the Yalu, and that is that the Russian is learning, as the British learned in South Africa. He is taking notes out of the Japanese book and applying them as far as the limited intelligence of the average Russian soldier will permit; and the Russian soldier who has been under fire several times has had a most enlivening if not liberal education.

So the enemy, in turn, undertook a night attack. Again the shrapnel bursts flashed over Hayentai after the sun went down, while the rifles blazed out from the crest which had been a dead grey against the sky during the day. Sleeping on a rocky bed near the castle of Kwantun, we saw the spectacle as we had seen it the night before. A Siberian regiment and a regiment fresh from Russia—the old to steady the new under the first staggering blast, and the new bringing ingenuous faith in his invincibility—came with drums—drums in the night! There was no artifice. The heavy Slav, like some mad giant, rushed upon skill with the rage of brute force. A torrent of men swept up Hayentai. They engulfed the Japanese who were there as the Japanese had engulfed the Russians the night before. Then the fight in the dark began. The Japanese, driven back on their reserve in the village, re-formed. Shell-fire no longer shook their nerves or broke their ranks. The batteries of neither side might fire in the dark without firing

into their own men. Hayentai was a débris-strewn, blood-strewn, shell-torn, open arena for men and rifles—and particularly for the bayonets on the ends of the rifles. Creeping upwards like cats, the little men put their steel into the big men and swamped the Russian advance before its reserves could be brought into action. In the morning the mist of shrapnel hanging over the crest was still Russian, which told us that the Japanese still held that "little hill," as vital to either side as a bridge to a roadstead.

CHAPTER XXIV

KUROPATKIN RETREATS

ON the morning of September 3rd, when the staff returned to Kwantun from its quarters in a little village near by, we were in a situation where, even if we could force our way, we might risk going little farther. We heard no word of Liao-yang, except that the Japanese had not yet entered the town, and we looked over the now familiar position upon the scattering gun-fire of line watching line grimly and jealously.

In the afternoon I rode back over the road by which the 2nd Division had come after its feint against the Russian left wing on the southern bank of the Taitse. On the river sands by the second bridge was a concourse of pack animals safely out of range of the Russian guns. Otherwise, on the levels there was no transportation to be in the way of the retreat of guns and ammunition trains, if the worst came. Once in the hills, you found the valley gorged. Here, was the servants' hall, the pantry, the store-room, the stoke-hole of the army, which every breathing man on the fighting line

thought of as a heavenly thing that was "coming up" when the battle was over. On the backs of cows as well as of Korean coolies were the little trunks with the stated sixty-two pounds of comforts that each Japanese officer was allowed. They had come from Chenampo and Seoul, and had never been separated so far from their owners before.

Its transportation is the one unshipshape-looking thing about the Japanese army. The little two-wheeled carts and the pack ponies from the home-land seemed poured out of the same mould as the regiments and the divisions and the generals. But the supplementary commissariat is of the East, eastern. Neither officers nor privates of the transport corps (bringing order out of a chaos of mules, donkeys, cows and carts and a babel of moos, squeals, brays and coolies' shouts) had any glory out of these great days in their country's history. They heard the distant rumble of guns, while they waited on the orders which might mean victory or defeat.

Our own cart was where we had left it. From a hill near by, Liaoyang was visible, and I could see in the gathering dusk the positions of the forces. The town was no longer a patch of silence on the plain. It lay between two hells. On one side on the plain were Japanese batteries; and on the other, across the river, were the Russian. You marked their positions as you would a line of gas jets. The air was full of the lightning of shrapnel bursts. I

was witnessing the last act in the drama. Only a rearguard remained yet to cross the bridges and then destroy them.

The Second and Fourth Armies were held back by a stream which could be forded by only a few men at a time in a few places. Kuropatkin's whole force of 200,000 was on the same side of the Taitse as the First Army. Facing the line of the enemy's retreat, Kuroki must be a spectator of its passing. His two divisions and his extra brigade were before six or seven times their number. Fresh reserves were marching in from Mukden, and the divisions that had fought Oku and Nodzu were crowding against our left. Though the onlookers could not see the Russian columns, we realized the pressure of their mass as you realize by the draught that the door of a darkened room has been opened. There was imminent danger of the 12th being enveloped. Kuroki sent for the Guards to cross the river in reinforcement. They came—as many of them as had the strength. Those who had not, fell asleep in their tracks, with hot stones for pillows.

At this critical juncture our communication with the main army was cut. We were isolated—a fair prize, indeed, for Kuropatkin's divisions if he realized his opportunity. Probably he did realize it, and probably his soldiers were as tired as ours. The staff which I had watched on many fields, for the first time gave the order to retreat. But no sooner were the orders for the 12th to fall back over the

wires, than communication with Grand Headquarters was resumed and the pressure from the Russians ceased.

The brave word followed the cautious word to the end of the corps. That long line of carts and coolies started out of the hills to close up with the force that it fed. The order for pursuit was easily given. Reaction gripping our weary force prevented its accomplishment. No stimulant of imperial ambition or clan loyalty, no ancestral faith could put more strength into the legs of this army.

After the staff had held its last conference for the day, General Kuroki stepped a little to one side, and, squatting Japanese fashion, sat silently looking out toward his lines. It was the first time that the Russians had stopped him. The samurai face, with its high cheekbones and its square jaw, was as expressionless as ever. After some minutes, he arose, and walked rather wearily by himself down the slope. He was not to receive the glory from this action that he had from the others; but in the comparative tribute of military praise which he and his corps deserved, the flanking movement across the Taitse was a master-stroke of nerve and execution, and the Yalu was a text-book manœuvre.

. . . . .

Vaguely, the army comprehended that it had won a victory. Definitely, it realized only that it had won the right to rest. The observer, with all restrictions removed, on the morning of the 4th,

SEARCHING FOR DEAD AMONG THE PITS OF THE RUSSIAN MAIN LINE OF DEFENCE AT LIAOYANG

hurried to Hayentai through the paths in the kowliang that the ammunition ponies had made. Mounds of earth, with ideograph-lettered posts surmounting them, did not cover all the Japanese that had fallen in the fight for the "little hill." Many more were being burned on the Japanese side of the slope.

On the Russian side, the Russian dead were being dragged to trenches. Looking west from the summit, Hayentai descends to level fields, which, a little to the right, are cut by a sunken path that carries away the heavy rains of summer. This had given the Russians cover for their assault. This had called to them in their panic when the Japanese forced them to flee. Here the faces of the dead were upturned like the faces of passengers coming up a gangway and looking aloft to the people on the next deck.

As a hog roots up the turf for nuts, so the Japanese common shells had ploughed the earth. Brass cartridge cases, shrapnel bullets, bits of "first-aid" bandages, and bits of Russian brown bread and buttons and clothing overspread the position. In a pile was such of the harvest of victory as was worth collecting. Russian and Japanese pannikins punctured by rifle-fire and torn by shrapnel, and Russian and Japanese caps slashed by bayonets, were thrown together.

I picked up a number of cartridges which bullets had struck. There was a bayonet that a bullet had

bent into a triangle; there were rifle-butts that had been shattered by shells into kindling wood. The most pathetic of all were the little blue-bound books which every Russian soldier carries. In these are entered his name, the time of his enlistment, and other facts for identification. On more than one the last entry was made by a bullet, and the ink it used was blood. The four drums were, in a sense, pathetic too. Their heads were in ribbons.

In this age of high organization, some officers who sit in routine facing rows of pigeon-holes will tell you that war is entirely made with brains, nowadays. All such should have seen Hayentai. There they would have learned that the taking of critical points, which are essential to academic plans, still depends upon brute butchery or brute courage. The visitor would have slipped in blood instead of dew. Like round figures on a carpet, the clots were set off on the earth where the grass was matted and worn away by struggle. It needed mincing steps not to touch every one if you walked in a straight line. In a dozen places I saw red paths where wounded men had dragged themselves away into the kowliang. Following one of these, I came to the coagulation which told the story of the death agony.

The marvellous thing was that, at one period of the struggle, if a wounded man could only take himself ten feet to the rear, he was safe. Where the rounding crest dipped on either side, twenty feet apart, for a time the Russian and the Japanese line

had lain in the dark, firing at the flashes of each other's rifles. Slipping down the hill-side, with the bullets whistling overhead like a gale through the rigging, you were as much out of the danger zone temporarily as if you had been in Mukden. The positions were clearly marked by the systematic arrangement of the blood-clots.

"Wasn't there ugly work? Was quarter always given?" I have been asked. My answer is that all was ugly work. Any one who does not palliate it, in order to be consistent, must let a burglar in his own house shoot at him without firing in response. In such a situation, soldiers are not waiting on injunctions from a court to restrain the enemy's violence. Their articulations become less like human speech than like savage cries. They are the ghosts of the individuals who line up on parade; ghosts trying to fight their way out of hell. The big man thrust at every little man, and the little man thrust at every big man, and the big man used his bayonet in powerful lunges, as the bull does his horns; the little man as a panther uses his claws. The Japanese officers, disregarding the sword of Europe —that decadent product of social functions— carried their samurai blades, which are made for killing at close quarters.

When I visited the military school in Tokyo in 1901, as I watched the cadets fencing, according to Japanese fashion, I remarked, "That must be splendid training for the eye, and grand exercise."

"And extremely useful," an officer replied.

It was about this time that Herr Bloch got his name frequently printed in all the papers on account of his book, which held that modern arms of precision would not allow armies to approach each other. And Hayentai and Chusan were only three years away.

The prostrate man might still be living, and he might still reach the bowels of an adversary with a thrust. Discrimination might be as fatal to yourself as throwing your oar overboard in a rapid. Men were shot into eternity, and slashed into eternity; perhaps some were scared into eternity. But these were not the veterans. I spoke with one of the veterans, a Sendai man.

"You want to use your bayonet with your arms, not your body." (He spoke as a cook would say, "The whites of two eggs well beaten," &c.). "The Roske uses his bayonet with his body. He sticks his head down and rushes at you. If he catches you, you are spitted for good. He is such a big fellow that he lifts you fairly off your feet. If you are quick on your legs, though, you can step to one side, and then you have him; the only way with little men with short arms is to get in close.

"The first time I went into a night attack I kept thinking of all that my officer told me. I felt like I did when I went in as a recruit, and the surgeon felt me all over."

"Stage fright," I suggested.

But a country boy from Sendai, though he had studied his English primer well, and tried to improve himself so as to rise in the world, did not understand that. At least, I did not think he did, by the operation of his Japanese smile.

"The first time I struck a Russian I could feel my bayonet grate on his bone," he went on. "I did not think of it at the time, but when I thought of it afterwards it seemed very awful. I had seen him coming like a big black shadow, and I had just time to dodge, and I felt his bayonet go by my cheek like a razor does over your face. I pulled my bayonet out, and sank it in his neck before he had time to strike me. If I had not killed him, he would have killed me. It is that way always. Night before last, I—"

He told me many other things, this intelligent private. Among them was how it happened that frequently he forgot to fire, when firing would have been much wiser. Many who have died from bayonet thrusts have had cartridges still in their rifle-chambers. When a man comes to close quarters he seems instinctively to grapple. He reverts from science to Nature, and Nature's method.

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